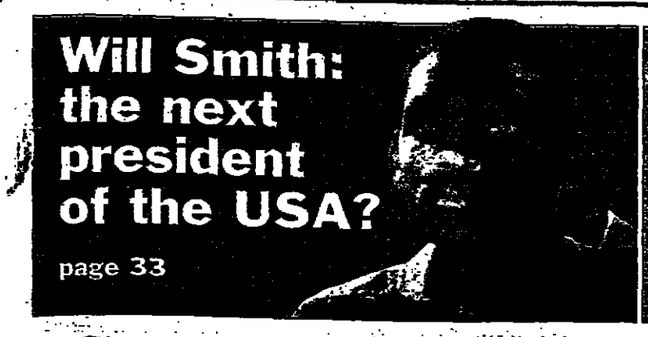
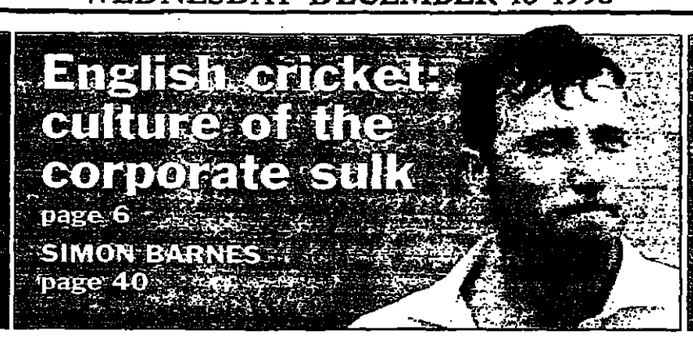
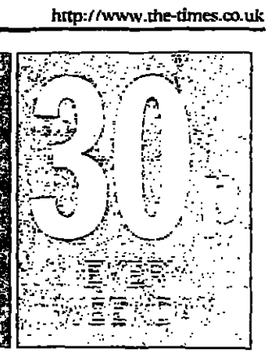
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Serps to be scrapped as pension focus switches to poor

BY JILL SHERMAN
CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE state earnings-related pension will be scrapped and big incentives offered to middle income earners to persuade them to take out private pensions, under reforms unveiled by the Government yesterday.

Alistair Darling, Social Security Secretary, announced that the Government would provide extra help for those earning less than £9,000 by setting up a second state pension and providing a guaranteed minimum pension. More help would also be provided for mothers and carers who had career breaks. But those earning above £9,000 will be encouraged to take out occupational, private or "stakeholder pensions" in a deliberate move to concentrate resources on the low paid.

The Green Paper confirms that the Government has backed away from a compulsory second pension but middle earners will be effectively financially penalised if they rely on state provision. All those earning between £9,000 and £18,500 - about 14 million people - will initially be given higher national insurance rebates to join a second state pension. But after five years this will be reduced to a flat rate rebate which will penalise anyone on salaries over £9,000.

In addition everyone will be given an annual statement forecasting how much they wil get in retirement if they stay making their present contributions.

The basic pension will remain and be updated with prices, but Mr Darling said that in the longer term the minimum guaranteed pension for poorer groups would be linked with earnings. The reforms, estimated to cost £500 million a year, and £5 billion by 2050, will lead to some redistribution of resources with the taxpayer paying for Britain's 5 million poorest pensioners. Mr Darling pledged that all those reaching retirement age would be protected but those on low incomes would also be eligible for the extra help.

Announcing the changes in the Commons last night, Mr Darling said he was setting out far-reaching reforms to ensure that the pensions system met the needs of the next 50 years. "The case for pension reform is overwhelming," Mr Darling said.

He argued that if the Government did nothing, one in three people could retire on income support in the year 2050. "Under the current system you can work hard all your life and still retire on an income so low that you'll depend on benefits for the rest of your life."

In addition many middle and high earners wanted to save more but had lost faith in the private pension system because of the scandal of pension mis-selling.

"Everyone who can save for their retirement should do so. In turn the government has a responsibility to provide security in retirement for those who cannot save enough," he said.

But Mr Darling surprised many Labour MPs by announcing that he intended to phase out the State Earnings Related Scheme within five years. Labour's manifesto committed the party to retaining Serps for this Parliament but the Government intends to introduce laws in 2001 to abolish it, which would come into effect after the start of the next Parliament.

The decision to back away from a compulsory scheme was last night derided by the Opposition parties who argued that Mr Darling had instead come up with a "mouse of a scheme".

Steve Webb, the Liberal Democrat pensions spokesman, said the proposals were not radical enough. "Unless the Government makes sure everyone is building up a substantial pension fund many of today's workers will still end up in poverty in old age."

Age Concern said: "This is great for future pensioners, but it does not address current pensioners."

Green paper, pages 10,11
Body blow, page 23
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Blow to England 2006 World Cup bid

Soccer chief quits in £3m loan row

BY MATT DICKINSON

THE chief executive of the Football Association resigned last night after he and the FA chairman were accused of offering a £3.2 million sweetener to secure support for England's bid to host the 2006 World Cup.

Graham Kelly quit his £200,000-a-year job after a decade in the post, but Keith Wiseman, the chairman, refused to stand down in spite of a unanimous vote of no confidence.

Glenn Hoddle's position as England coach could also be the subject of renewed speculation, since Mr Kelly and Mr Wiseman were his most influential supporters at the FA.

Mr Kelly and Mr Wiseman had been under investigation by the FA's executive committee for alleged abuse of power after claims that Mr Wiseman had promised the Football Association of Wales a £3.2 million loan in exchange for the guarantee of votes in a ballot for a position on the Fifa executive committee. The home nations are represented by David Will, a Scottish lawyer, but the FA has been hoping to replace him with Mr Wiseman.

Fifa is the world governing body for football and its 25-man executive will determine where the finals will be staged in 2006. That decision will be taken within 15 months, but the scandal has left the bid in disarray and jeopardised England's chances of hosting the competition.



Wiseman: refused to resign after no-confidence vote

Details of the loan, which was to have been paid over eight years, came to light only when the FA finance committee received an invoice from the FA of Wales for the first £400,000 instalment.

The Welsh association agreed on Friday to a bigt reduction in the payment after being advised that the sum had not been approved by the appropriate committees and that the FA could not afford the amount promised.

FA lawyers were called in to examine whether the loan constituted a misuse of funds and whether it had been made without following normal FA procedures or proper consultation. Although it was Mr Wiseman who pledged the money, it has been alleged that Mr Kelly's signature appeared on related correspondence.

Mr Kelly, 52, resigned after a special meeting of the FA's 11-man executive committee yesterday afternoon and left his job immediately.

He said: "I have always acted in the best interests of the FA, in my opinion, but I could not carry the executive committee on this issue. We agreed terms for my departure. There is no question of financial impropriety by myself. I have always acted in the FA's interests but I could not convince others of that.

"I don't want to say whether I resigned or was asked to resign. That is for others to make clear. All I want to say is that I am very disappointed and saddened because I have always sought to act in the best interests of the game."

A unanimous vote of no-confidence in Mr Wiseman was passed, but he refused to resign. His situation will be discussed at an extraordinary meeting of the full FA council on January 4, but his position appears untenable.

Last night Mr Wiseman, a coroner who is also chairman of Southampton Football Club, issued a statement saying: "The issue is one for the full FA council. I do not intend to make any comment until I have shared the full circumstances of this matter with them all. Save that, the version of events carried hitherto in the national press is a gross distortion of the truth."

Geoff Thompson, vice-chairman of the FA, has become acting chairman while David Davies, the director of public affairs, has become executive director in overall charge of the everyday running of the organisation. Mr Davies, who will be the front runner to succeed take over as chief executive, said of Mr Kelly: "I am sure he is very shocked and saddened. But I do not believe the game's reputation has been tarnished and everybody within the FA is determined that football will move forward."

Tony Banks, the Sports Minister, said: "It is a matter of great sadness to hear of events at the FA. However, it is for the internal workings of the FA to resolve the situation."

Tom Pendry, the Labour MP who is chairman of the Football Trust, commented: "Anything which disrupts the unity of football at this stage cannot be good for our chances for the year 2006. It is regrettable that there seems to be some kind of disarray at the top and that could well affect our chances. Hopefully, however, the football world will unite once this affair is over."

Kelly profile, page 42
FA reeling, page 44

DAVE CHESKIN/PA



Graham Kelly, who resigned as FA chief executive over a £3.2m loan to the Welsh FA

Moderates desert Clinton on eve of vote

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

BILL CLINTON faced the darkest hours of his presidency last night as the first cracks appeared in his public support and moderate Republicans refused to help him to fight off impeachment.

A new poll showed that most Americans believe he should resign if he is impeached — an outcome that looked increasingly likely yesterday as one key Republican "fence-sitter" after another announced that they would vote to make him stand trial in the Senate for high crimes and misdemeanours.

The poll for *The Washington Post* and *ABC News* showed that 58 per cent of the American people think that the President should quit if any of the votes on four articles of impeachment go against him tomorrow.

Mr Clinton, who had appeared subdued during his trip to Israel, was flying back last night to try to persuade moderate Republicans to vote against the four articles of impeachment to be debated by the House of Representatives. But the news from Washington was grim. Republicans who had been undecided about how to cast their votes were declaring that Mr Clinton had not done enough to convince them.

The whole impeachment issue, which had seemed to be dead after the Republicans' poor performance in the elections last month, has been revived because of anger in Congress about Mr Clinton's continued refusal to admit that he lied under oath in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case and in his grand jury testimony. The heaviest blow came from Jack Quinn, a New York Republican who had said he would vote against the impeachment of Mr Clinton, who announced that he had changed his mind and now believed the charge of perjury warranted impeachment.

Fred Upton, the highly influential moderate Republican who had been wavering, also said he would vote against the President. That leaves only three Republicans who have

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TV licence fee passes £100 mark

BY MARK INGLEFIELD
POLITICAL REPORTER

THE cost of a BBC television licence will rise to more than £100 next year, Chris Smith, the Secretary for Culture, Media and Sport, announced yesterday.

From next April, a colour licence will rise from £97.50 to £101, and a black and white from £32.50 to £33.50. The increases will be followed by two more over the next two years.

But Mr Smith rejected a plea by the BBC Board of Governors and its Director-General, Sir John Birt, to abandon a five-year formula set by the last government shortly before the 1997 general election.

The report, compiled by independent consultants Braxton Associates, ties any rise in licence payments to the Retail Price Index until 2002.

The BBC was quick to defend the rise. "It is a penny-a-day increase," said a spokesman. "Each household pays less than 28p per day."

Lloyd Webber plays in court for a New York jury

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

ANDREW Lloyd Webber serenaded a New York jury on a courtroom piano to deny allegations that he stole a struggling songwriter's melody for the theme tune of *The Phantom of the Opera*.

"I have just always loved these chords," the British composer told the nine jurors as he tickled the ivories to show how he created the song for his then-wife Sarah Brightman.

His performance in the grimy federal courthouse marked the finale of his eight-year copyright dispute with a Baltimore clothing salesman and guitar-strumming Christian songwriter, Ray Repp.

Mr Repp claims Lord Lloyd Webber plagiarised his 1978 tune *Till You* for the Phantom song. Having earned just $75.87 dollars from his song Mr Repp is seeking a share of the musical's worldwide gross of $2.6 billion.

Lord Lloyd Webber, whose other hits include *Cats*, *Evita*, and *Jesus Christ Superstar*, responded that *Till You* had itself been lifted from his *Close Every Door* in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* but a judge rejected the counter-claim.

Taking the witness stand, Lord Lloyd Webber insisted that he had never heard of Mr Repp or his song before writing *Phantom*, and scoffed at a lawyer's suggestion that he could remember every song he ever heard. He said that he went out of his way to avoid listening to music unintentionally. "I hate it when it's in a restaurant or in a car or a taxi. My driver has instructions never to have the radio on."

He said the Phantom song had been inspired by his former wife, Sarah Brightman, who later starred in the musical as Christine. "I wanted to play around with what we could do with Sarah's voice," he said. "And I just came up with this."

Ms Brightman said that he had written the song for her at his home in Sydmonton, Hampshire, at the beginning of their relationship in 1983.

"I remember standing by the piano and actually working on the song and I remember there were passages of the song which were in what I call a chest voice, which is the lower register of the voice. I remember thinking, 'Oh, this is going to be hard to do'," she said.

The composer said that he had the support of Elton John, Sting and Mick Jagger.



Sarah Brightman: "This song will be hard to sing"

Law lords hear Pinochet appeal

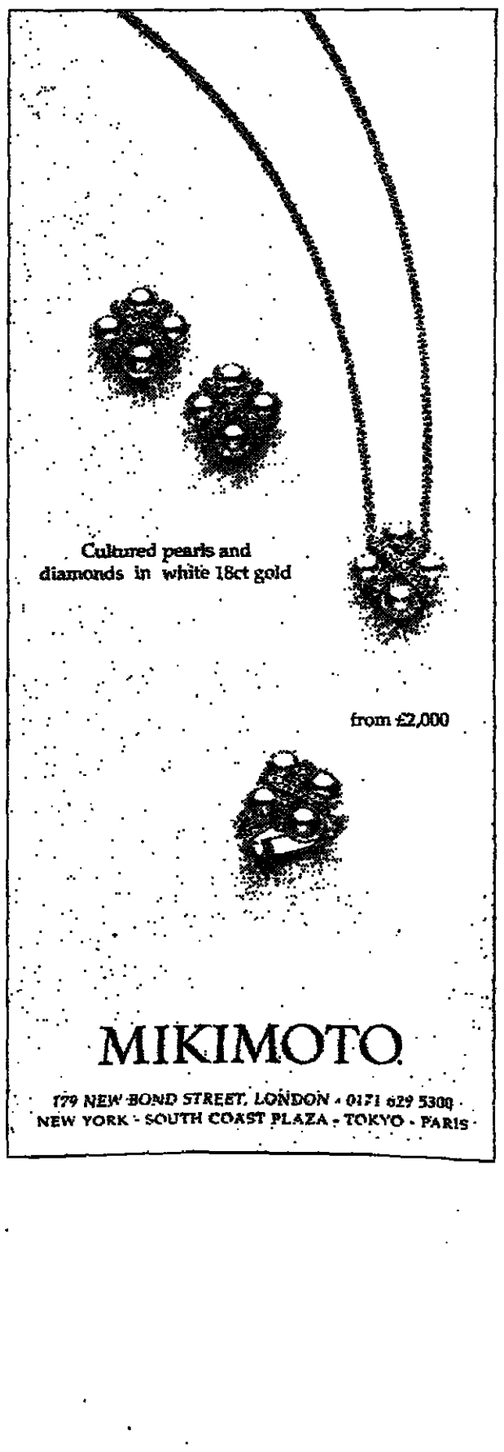
Lord Hoffmann's failure to disclose a close connection with Amnesty International had given rise to a real danger of bias in his ruling against General Pinochet, the law lords were told yesterday in an appeal to them to set aside their decision that the former dictator does not enjoy sovereign immunity. The hearing continues today, and a ruling is expected next week..... Page 2

Doubts over Nobel story

In her autobiography the Guatemalan Indian rights leader Rigoberta Menchu, winner of a Nobel Peace Prize, describes a harrowing tale of exploitation. David Stoll, an anthropologist, now says her story is not altogether true..... Page 12

Schools boost

Schools in Wales have almost closed the achievement gap with their English counterparts at GCSE, according to the examination tables published today. There was n a 2 per cent pass rate increase last summer..... Page 30



Alice is one who knows when all is not quite as it seems

MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Readers of yesterday's sketch may recall that Alice accompanied me through the Looking Glass to watch, with vexed curiosity, Monday's statement by the Prime Minister. Curiosity seems to have whetted her appetite. Irritatingly, she insisted on a return visit to the Commons yesterday, to hear the Social Security Secretary, Alistair Darling, make his long-awaited statement about pensions reform.

To my surprise — for he is a handsome and plausible fellow — Alice took against Mr Darling immediately. "He looks like the Devil!" she whispered, gripping my hand.

"The Devil? Never make personal remarks, Alice."

"Those black eyebrows and that soft white hair. And that clever way of talking, all so smooth and reasonable, as if he's persuading you of two contradictory things at once."

"Silly child. Mr Darling's a very clever man who had an excellent private education in Edinburgh. Now be quiet and listen to him."

And Darling began to speak. The trouble is, Alice had a point. The Social Security Secretary was almost too good to be true. His statement was full of reassuring phrases but it was difficult to work out quite what it all added up to. To guide journalists' understanding he had placed little sub-headings onto the text provided for us: "Case for Change;" "Principled Reform;" "More Secure;" "Cheap;" "Flexible" ...

"Today I can announce," he said — and described his Minimum Income Guarantee.

Alice looked puzzled. "Hasn't that Min ... whatever-it-is, been announced before? I'm sure I've heard people in the Government saying they were 'unveiling' it quite a long time ago."

"Yes, child," I had to confess, "the Minimum Income Guarantee has been launched many times this year. This is now the occasion on which a minister has announced it in the last three months. I think they hope we'll forget they've announced it already."

"Why?"

"Because they don't really have many new ideas to unveil, Alice. So they just keep unveiling the same ones. Now, settle down and listen, in case Mr Darling does have something new to say."

He did. "Today I can announce the new State Second Pension. This will deliver a dramatic increase in the value of pensions."

"Whose pensions?" hissed Alice.

"Lots of people's," I said, "a dramatic increase in *all* their pensions."

"How?"

"Well ... maybe they'll have to pay more in."

"No," said Alice, who does not miss much. "That Devil man said there would be 'no compulsion'."

"Well, maybe the Government will pay."

"No," said Alice, "he said it would be unacceptable to take the money from rich contributors. He said it would cost half a billion pounds. That's only nine pounds per citizen."

"That's *this* year, Alice. One day it will cost a lot more."

"Why didn't he say so?"

"Hush. Stop being so critical. Listen as he answers questions from the MPs."

Jeremy Corbyn (Lab, Islington N) and a number of others complained about what some called "means-testing" pensioners' benefits and others called the "poverty trap".

"We'd rather direct money to those on low earnings, than to those who don't need it," cooed Mr Darling. Help would be "targeted".

"But isn't that what 'means-testing' *means*?" whispered Alice. "That's what the poverty trap *is*, isn't it? — when you only get help if you're poor."

Stephen Webb, the Lib Dem spokesman, was allowed one question. "Where's the money coming from?" he asked. "Tomorrow's taxpayers."

"I like that man," whispered Alice. "He seems to be making sense."

Law lord's link with Amnesty 'led to bias risk'

By Joanna Bale

LORD HOFFMANN'S failure to disclose his close connection with Amnesty International had given rise to a real danger of bias in his ruling against General Pinochet, the law lords were told yesterday.

In an appeal to the law lords to set aside their decision that the former dictator does not enjoy sovereign immunity, Clare Montgomery, QC, said that Lord Hoffmann had violated "long-recognised rules of practice" by failing to declare his directorship of the charitable arm of Amnesty International.

Lord Hoffmann had been an "active and hostile interrogator" of the general's lawyers during the CPS appeal, while Amnesty's published works "make no bones" about the necessity of bringing him to justice. She said: "We suggest that the duration, variety, intensity and proximity of the relationship between Lord Hoffmann, Amnesty International and the issues raised in the appeal give rise in the very least to a real danger of bias.

"Furthermore we suggest that there was a duty upon both Amnesty and Lord Hoffmann to disclose that connection, and the failure to do so in the circumstances was contrary to long-recognised rules of practice, given the length of the connection." A panel of three law lords, Lords Browne-Wilkinson, Hutton and Hope of Craighead, and two retired law lords, Lords Goff of Chieveley and Nolan, were told that Lord Hoffmann's links with Amnesty were a "long-standing deep-rooted family connection which continues to this day."

Lady Hoffmann has worked as an administrator for the organisation since 1977, and Lord Hoffmann had been associated with it for at least 18 years. In 1981, while still at the Bar, he appeared for the trustees of the Amnesty International Trust in a court case, and in 1990 he became one of two directors of Amnesty International Charity Ltd, eventually becoming chairman.

Its annual report for the year ending December 1993 indicated that AICL paid for a report on Chile which makes "plain and unequivocal reference to the Pinochet years and expresses plain and unequivocal views on what happened", Miss Montgomery told the hearing. The report concluded: "Amnesty International continues to call for full investigation of human rights abuses and for those responsible to be brought to justice."

The extent of the financial relationship between AICL and Amnesty International (AI) was revealed by the charity's latest accounts, which show an income of £8.2 million for the year to March 1998, of which £5.5 million came from Amnesty International.

Lord Browne-Wilkinson indicated that the law lords would not consider the option of setting aside Lord Hoffmann's vote alone — which would have the effect of granting General Pinochet his freedom, as a 2-2 draw would be taken as confirming the decision of the lower court. They would consider only whether to overturn the earlier law lords' decision in its entirety, leading the way to a possible fresh hearing of the case.

Alun Jones, QC, for the Crown Prosecution Service, argued that General Pinochet's lawyers had known of Lord Hoffmann's links with Amnesty before Mr Straw's ruling of December 9, and had mentioned them in their representations to him. By doing this, he argued, they had chosen to allow the question of whether there may have been actual or apparent bias to be settled by Mr Straw.

The hearing continues today, and a ruling is expected next week.



UPPA

Lord and Lady Hoffman: their "long-standing deep-rooted family connection continues to this day"

Judges who will hear challenge

By Frances Gibb
Legal Correspondent

THE judge who is chairing the panel of five law lords hearing the challenge to the ruling of five of their colleagues against General Pinochet is the most senior of the 12 law lords who make up the highest court in the land.

A highly experienced and skilled judge, Lord Browne-Wilkinson, 68, is regarded as liberal and humane. He was responsible for overseeing the inquiry this year into "fat cat" legal aid fees — describing the disparity between the legal aid bills submitted by QCs and the sums finally allowed as "shattering".

When head of the High Court Chancery division more than ten years ago, he lifted the ban on *Spycatcher*, the memoirs of Peter Wright, the former MI5 officer.

Sitting with "Nico" Browne-Wilkinson on the challenge that is unprecedented in 150 years of legal history will be Lords Hutton, Nolan, Hope of Craighead and Goff of Chieveley. Lord Hutton, born in Belfast, is best known for having been Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland. He began his career there before being called to the English Bar in 1972.

Lord Hope is Scotland's most senior judge. He is regarded as a moderate. Lord Goff, the immediate past senior law lord, and Lord Nolan, who from 1994-97 chaired the Committee on Standards in Public Life, are both retired.

Among Lord Nolan's rulings are allowing the appeal of Judith Ward against killing ten people in the 1974 M62 coach bomb; and finding Kenneth Baker, the former Home Secretary, in contempt for deporting a Zairean refugee in defiance of a court order.

The judges will decide whether to allow the petition, from Kingsley Napley, General Pinochet's lawyers, that Lord Hoffmann's decision in the case should be disregarded; and the law lords' three-two ruling set aside.

The petition is based on Lord Hoffmann's failure to disclose that his wife works for Amnesty International and he has been an unpaid director of as charity affiliated to Amnesty for seven years.

If they allow the petition, then the whole hearing would have to be held again.

The lawyers for the general will not have to show that Lord Hoffmann's link influenced his decision that General Pinochet had no immunity from prosecution; merely that the link merited being disclosed and that if it did, whether that failure means that a reasonable person would perceive justice not to have been done even if it was done.

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Davies sets plan for a comeback

By Roland Watson
Political Correspondent

RON Davies is planning to his political career in the new year. The former Welsh Secretary is piecing together details of a comeback which he hopes will pitch him into the Welsh assembly in May.

The news came as Alun Michael, his successor as Welsh Secretary, hinted that he may be willing to give Mr Davies a job should he become the assembly's First Secretary.

The centrepiece of Mr Davies's rehabilitation campaign will be a pamphlet written by him and a lecture given by him in February on the future of the principality. One of the themes will be the need for a tolerant and just society in the Wales of the 21st century.

Mr Davies, who resigned after an "error of judgment" on Clapham Common, had been hoping that the Fabian Society would publish his ideas, instead, he is to produce his work for the Institute for Welsh Affairs.

Fears on Europe soothed by Blair

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

TONY BLAIR stepped up his pro-European offensive yesterday by trying to answer fears that the rise of centre-left governments in Europe would mean a return to the politics of "old Labour".

He set out to reassure what he called the "intelligent sceptics" who realised that the importance of Europe to Britain, but were anxious about the direction it was taking. He suggested that misgivings about where Europe might move under its new governments showed a lack of confidence in the case Labour was putting for enterprise and fairness.

This was striking a chord across Europe, a fact that was barely covered in the media at home, he said. He was careful to differentiate between out-and-out sceptics who looked at everything that happened as an excuse to be anti-European, and "intelligent scepticism".

He put the majority of the Tory party into the first category. Attempting to reassure the second, Mr Blair said that people should have confidence in their own arguments because over time the right arguments won.

Speaking at the 150th anniversary of the Associated Press in London, Mr Blair said that Labour was arguing for the policies that won it its landslide — economic rigour, fiscal and monetary stability, the understanding that the market alone could not deliver social justice but there could be no return to the days of tax-and-spend.

He said that the "unintelligent scepticism" had claimed that the social chapter would cost a million jobs and had seen the beef ban as an excuse to declare war on Europe.

Mr Blair said that telling the Government to "get close to our allies in Europe" did not mean he was batting for Brussels. "I see it as batting for Britain. I will pursue this new approach in Europe not because it is in Europe's interests but because it is in Britain's interests."

Moderates desert Clinton

Continued from page 1

stated that they oppose impeachment. Two others are reconsidering their decision to vote against impeachment. With three Democrats saying that they would vote for impeachment, Mr Clinton needs at least 14 Republican votes.

Vice-President Al Gore has cancelled a proposed trip to New Hampshire tomorrow to help Mr Clinton with behind the scenes lobbying of moderate Republicans, and White House lawyers were scheduling meetings with some of those they still hoped they could sway. "We do not think the world has fallen down around us yet," one White House source said.

Celebrities were also mobilising to shore up support for the President. The actor Robert de Niro was among those placing calls to undecided Republicans, while Toni Morrison, Elie Wiesel, Alec Baldwin and Caroline Schlossberg Keenedy addressed a rally against impeachment in New York. The National Health and Human Service Employees Union used its 80-strong telemarketing team to lobby people in the districts of undeclared Republicans.

While the *Washington Post-ABC* poll showed that people thought Mr Clinton should quit if impeached, it also showed that the public still does not want him to become only the second President to suffer that fate. Americans have long since indicated that they are heartily sick of the whole Monica Lewinsky affair and they would apparently prefer the President to fall on his sword than endure a Senate trial that could last months.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Speeding fines 'have become a lottery'

Police decisions on speeding prosecutions have become a lottery because forces have dropped national standards and adopted individual policies, a Home Office report revealed yesterday. Motorists caught by some forces are escaping any action at all, the report said, while others find officers opting for a caution instead of a prosecution. Some forces, however, still adhere to a strict policy according to national guidelines.

The variations in policy between the 43 forces in England and Wales have now become so wide that the report by Colin Smith, an inspector of constabulary, says that the criminal justice system will be discredited. He said that inconsistency was rife because traffic policing had come to be seen as a "Cinderella service" which lacks cash and is not considered a crucial task for police.

Gulf documents

The Ministry of Defence has published two internal documents in the Commons to counter allegations that it has been secretly investigating the affects of depleted uranium on Gulf veterans. They show that it has examined the type of tests that might be needed for an investigation, indicating that it is ready to take the issue seriously if uranium can be shown to be a possible factor.

£1.3m denied

Jack Straw has refused to provide an extra £1.3 million to deal with a mounting backlog of alleged miscarriages of justices that threatens to overwhelm the recently set up Criminal Cases Review Commission. MPs on the Home Affairs Select Committee are concerned that the commission could be heading for problems such as the ones that hit the Child Support Agency.

Meningitis death

A student studying at Birmingham University has died of meningitis. John Dixon, aged 19, from Newport, south Wales, suffered for a few days with flu-like symptoms but was eventually admitted to hospital in the city, where he died on Friday. Twenty other students at the university close to Mr Dixon have been vaccinated against the disease as a precaution.

Officers arrested

Scotland Yard anti-corruption investigators have suspended or arrested 81 suspects, Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, said. Since the drive began last autumn investigators have charged 35 people. Forty five serving officers have also been suspended. Sir Paul forecast that investigations into allegations could continue for two or three years.

Move on hunt ban

The campaign to ban fox hunting will take on new momentum today when Labour MPs are asked to sign up to the principle of local referendums to decide the issue. A paper circulated by the parliamentary party's home affairs committee, which will arrive on MPs' desks today, seeks their support for a new effort to outlaw hunting before the next general election.

Protest eviction

One of the last protesters to be evicted from the site of Britain's first toll motorway near Canwell, Staffordshire, was a 16-year-old girl who claims to have travelled from Australia. The girl and another protester spent a night in Lichfield police station. She was later charged with obstructing the eviction and released on bail. She will appear in juvenile court.

Britt Ekland tells of how Rolex was torn from her wrist

Susie Steiner on actress's evidence that shopper eyed her watch and dashed from shop ready to mug her

THE villains in Britt Ekland's old films were usually easy to spot. Yesterday she was accused of confusing a real-life crook with a shopper in the *fruit* section of her local supermarket.

Miss Ekland, who played Mary Goodnight in the 1974 James Bond film *The Man with the Golden Gun*, was robbed of her £10,000 Rolex watch in the street in Chelsea. She said that the robber was a man whom she had seen earlier *while shopping* inside the store.

Carl Hutson, 20, was said to have eyed her gold and diamond-studded wristwatch and then went outside so quickly "it was like he was a professional runner". Miss Ekland says that he was the man who then mugged her. She picked him out an identity parade, but she had also thought it might be one of the volunteer participants. She wore glasses at the parade.

Gareth Rees, defending at Southwark Crown Court, asked her about her need to wear glasses, saying her identification was not certain. "I only need them for reading," she replied. "It's an age thing."

Mr Rees said: "Being so famous you suffer the problem that, whenever you are in a public place, you are recognised. It makes you self-conscious. People stare at you. You have therefore, over the years, dealt with it by avoiding eye contact."

Miss Ekland, 56, said that she originally mistook Hutson for a fan on September 6 at Somerfield's, when she saw him with a woman and child hovering in the fruit and vegetable section.

"I could see them stopping and turning and looking at me," she said. "I don't look straight at people because, being an actress, that invites people to come over to you, so I look out of the corner of my eye.

"I didn't feel I looked very good. I thought, 'Oh no, they may come and ask for my autograph.'"

According to the prosecution, Hutson was checking out her watch. The Swedish-born actress said that she then saw him run out of the supermarket leaving his girlfriend and child still inside.

Miss Ekland carried on with her shopping and left later, with two carrier bags and a large container of mineral water. The attack happened once she was outside and walking down the street.

"I was just going to turn when I felt this burning at my wrist and a pull," she told the court. "I looked and there was the man. It happened so fast. My wrist was bleeding and I was screaming, 'Stop him, stop him, he has taken my watch.'"

Miss Ekland said that the attack left "marks on my wrist for days". She immediately ran back towards the supermarket, where she spotted the man's girlfriend still waiting.

"I told her I was making a citizen's arrest. My friends arrived and I said, 'Stay with her.' I thought I was going to faint so they took me to the back to the store and sat me down and gave me some water."

Hutson, of Streatham, South London, denies robbery. In a statement to police, he admitted visiting Somerfield supermarket with his girlfriend, Kim Walsh, and two-year-old child, but denied taking part in any robbery outside. Miss Walsh said that her former boyfriend was someone who "leaves suddenly", and that she did not see him again that day.

Miss Ekland is currently rehearsing her role as the fairy godmother in *Cinderella*, due to open on Friday at the Wimbledon Theatre. She appears with *The Sun* columnist Gary Bushell, the sportsman Kriss Akabusi and the *Generation Game* hostess Melanie Stace. Last Christmas she was in *Mother Goose* at Chichester.

At the age of 19, she married the comedian Peter Sellers after a ten-day courtship. He described her as "a mixture of Loren and Bardot and Ekberg". She also lived with the rock star Rod Stewart and her name has been linked to the film stars Warren Beatty and George Hamilton, and the photographer Lord Lichfield.

The trial continues.

JACK HILL



Britt Ekland yesterday: she said that Hutson went outside so quickly "it was like he was a professional runner"

School's almost out for teachers who won £9m jackpot



By Russell Jenkins

A SYNDICATE of 30 staff from a Manchester secondary school won the £9,110,738 jackpot in Saturday night's National Lottery draw. Twenty-eight teachers, the caretaker and a technician from St Thomas Aquinas Upper School in Chorlton will each collect £300,000.

The winners, who include the school's headmistress, Pat Carney, had failed to spot their good fortune on Monday when the numbers were pinned, as usual, to the teachers' notice board. It was only when the syndicate leader Gerard Sims, an IT teacher, idly looked up the numbers on Teletext at home that he discovered their win.

Surrounded by his fellow winners as they received the winning cheque yesterday, he said that he had felt "physically sick" after realising that they had won while he was at home looking after two poorly children.

"I couldn't believe it, but when it started to sink in I just had to tell someone," he said. "I wanted to tell my wife the news in person but first I called the school and spoke to the headteacher to arrange a meeting with everyone. Then I bundled the kids up warmly and drove to see my wife. She thought I was joking but I think the look on my face was enough to finally convince her."

At school, he asked to speak to Mrs Carney confidentially and told her after she had shut the door. "There were some screams I think," he said.

Mr Sims said that he had chosen the numbers, selected at random each week on an "archaic" Acorn Archimedes computer, which "should have been replaced by this Government". Each syndicate member paid a pound for each of the two weekly draws. In recent months their luck had been poor, winning only £30 between September and October.

The lottery win may leave the school's governors with a headache if some of the 28 teachers decide to take early retirement. Altogether the comprehensive school has 42 staff.

Many refused to be drawn on the subject, but Brian Meehan, a 53-year-old maths teacher, admitted that his £300,000 hd made him think about retirement. "I certainly have not wondered about spending it, but clearly the lack of a mortgage to someone over 50 makes a big difference," he said.

Some of the winners said that their non-Lottery playing colleagues had been "tremendous" and that the syndicate was planning to help them out financially. Celebrations, however, have been put on hold until term ends on Friday. "We are very busy in school with exams going on and no-one has had time to do much about it," Mrs Carney said.

Mr Sims said that he planned to spend Christmas the same way as usual with, perhaps, just a few more presents and, maybe, a bottle of champagne or two.

Father Philip Sumner, the chairman of the school's governors, said: "When I found out, the first comment I got from the school was that there were 25 resignations on the table, but hopefully that will not be the case. "The only implication for the school is we may have to build a bigger car park for all the swanky cars."

St Thomas Aquinas himself would probably have welcomed the lottery win as divine providence, as long as the cash was used in a reasonable way, and to help others. St Thomas (1225-74), a Dominican philosopher whose teachings have had a profound influence the Roman Catholic Church, wrote in his seminal work, *Summa Theologica*: "Above all others, the rational creature is subject to divine providence in a more excellent way, in so far as he himself partakes of a share in providence, by being provident both for self and others."

Titanic director faces epic divorce after trouble on set

From Giles Whittell in Washington

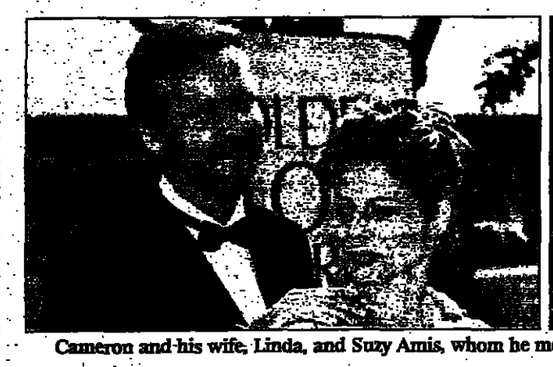
A DIVORCE of blockbuster proportions is looming in Hollywood, where Linda Hamilton, the wife of the director James Cameron, is trying to end their marriage after 18 months in the glare of the success of his *Titanic*.

Hamilton, an actress, filed for divorce in Los Angeles on Monday, citing "irreconcilable differences" and seeking custody of the couple's five-year-old daughter. Their marriage was said already to be under intense pressure when the family appeared together on Cameron's night of triumph at this year's Oscars, when *Titanic* won 11 awards.

It will take a ten-day trial to divide Cameron's huge fortune, Hamilton's divorce papers forecast. He is reported to be the world's fifth richest entertainer.

The director's wealth is put at $115 million (£70 million), which includes a $50 million bonus from Twentieth Century Fox for *Titanic*'s $2 billion takings since its release a year ago.

The director had initially waived his fee for the story about the doomed liner as the film's budget went past $200 million, but he is now thought to have earned $100 million from it in all.





Cameron and his wife, Linda, and Suzy Amis, whom he met while filming *Titanic*

Cameron also owns his own production company and founded Digital Domain, a successful computerised special effects company.

Under Californian law Hamilton is entitled to half the couple's "community property" unless a pre-nuptial agreement states otherwise. The couple do not appear to have such an agreement, judging by the divorce papers' declaration that both parties' assets are "still to be determined".

The couple came together after Hamilton had appeared in two of Cameron's early successes, *Terminator* and *Terminator 2*. They were not married until June last year, however — since when Cameron has been catapulted from being merely another action film-maker to being "king of the world", as he said on Oscar night.

Asked after the ceremony if success had changed her husband, Hamilton said: "He was always a jerk, so there's no way to really measure."

Even then, rumours were rife that he had been having an affair with Suzy Amis, a young actress in *Titanic* with whom he has since been seen frequently in public. "He'd been drooling over her on the set," Cameron's biographer said. "He had a crush on her."

Tension in the Cameron family was evident on Oscar night, when the director was seen yelling at his wife and pulling her by the arm as they walked down the red carpet into the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

The couple had separated before, in 1994. They did so again in April this year, when removal vans were seen outside Cameron's Malibu home. This is his fourth marriage and Hamilton's second.

Unwelcome role for Bill actor

By a Correspondent

THE actor William Murray, who plays Detective Sergeant Don Beech in the ITV series *The Bill*, took the law into his own hands when he attacked two men he considered a bad influence on his 14-year-old daughter, a court was told.

Mr Murray, 57, left Brian Basquill, 23, and Andrew Joyce, 22, cut and bruised, a jury was told yesterday. Later Mr Murray threatened Mr Joyce in an attempt to get him to withdraw his complaint, it was alleged. The actor denies affray, two charges of assault and intimidating a witness.

John Cooper, for the prosecution, told jurors at Basildon Crown Court, Essex, not to be swayed by Mr Murray's fame. He said that the actor had warned the two men, who lived near him in Brentwood, Essex, to stay away from his daughter although she still wanted to be friends with them.

In March, Mr Cooper said, the defendant and other men banged on the door of Mr Basquill's home looking for the girl, who cannot be named for legal reasons. "During this incident Mr Basquill and Mr Joyce were attacked and assaulted by Mr Murray," said Mr Cooper. "One of the men Mr Murray was with produced a knife and threatened Mr Basquill."

Two months later, he said, Mr Joyce had been in a hamburger restaurant with friends when Mr Murray came in.



Murray: wanted men to stay away from daughter

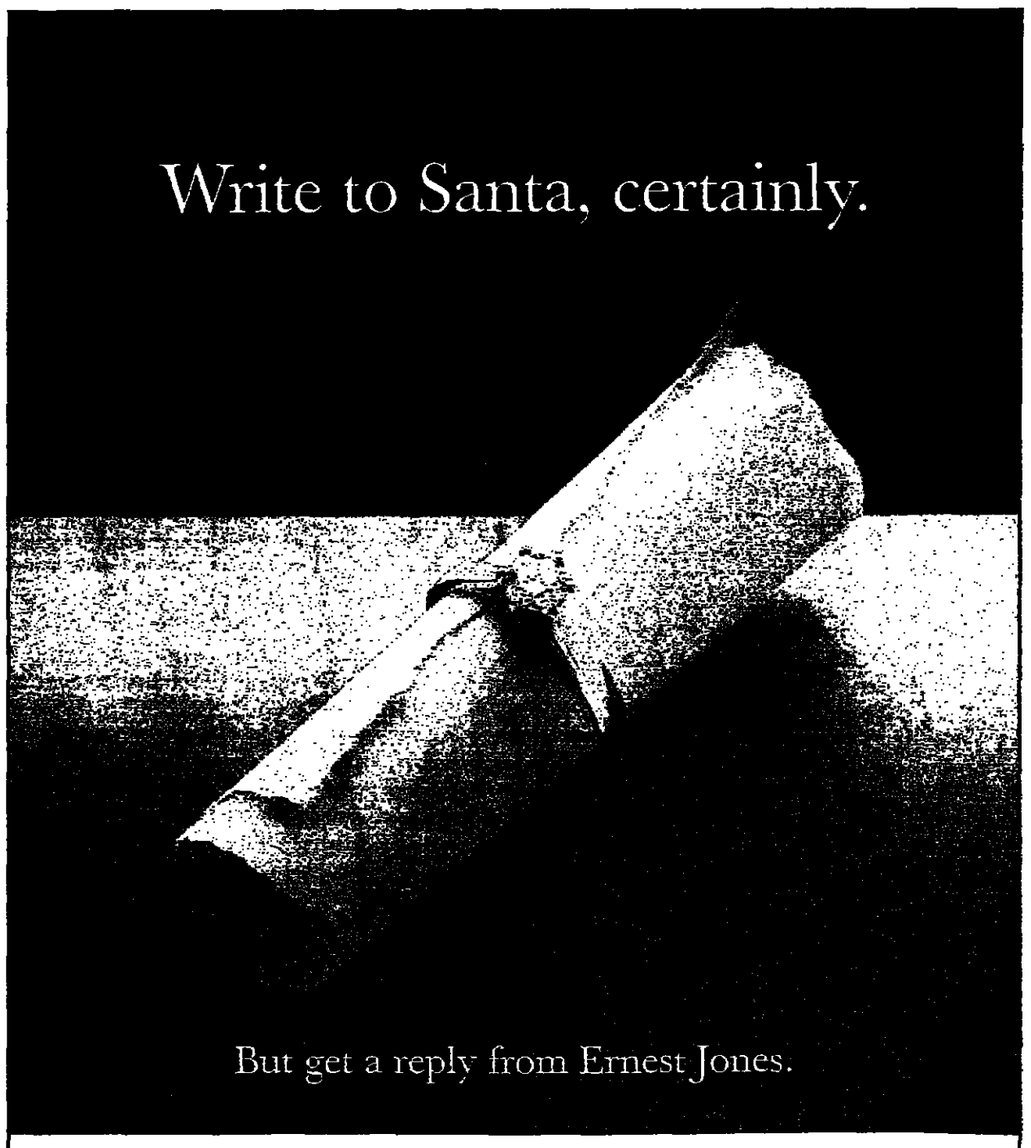
"Mr Murray tried to get Mr Joyce to drop this complaint against him," Mr Cooper said. "The defendant got out a pack of police photographs showing Mr Joyce's injuries. And Mr Murray said, 'I am going around pubs in Brentwood showing them these and I am going to get them to bar you and tell them you are a paedophile.'

"Mr Joyce will tell you that Mr Murray was intimidating and threatening."

The actor told police that he had gone to Mr Basquill's house because of concern for his daughter, who had disappeared. He said that by coincidence a delegation of other concerned parents was also at the house.

Mr Murray told police that it was also a coincidence that he was in the hamburger restaurant at the same time as Mr Joyce.

The trial continues.



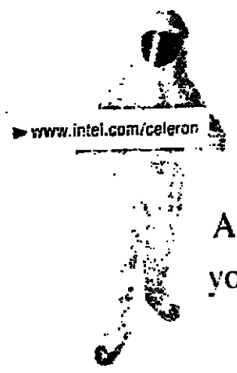
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Farewell to 'fair lassie' whose sparkle lives on

Royal protocol was inescapable at a service to mark the life of Susan Barrantes, reports **Alan Hamilton**

IT WAS not so much a memorial service, more a thanksgiving for a rollercoaster life. Susan Barrantes, the mother of the Duchess of York, who died in a road accident near her Argentinian ranch in September, did not live by halves.

More than 500 relatives and friends packed St Paul's Church in Knightsbridge, London, to hear a glowing testimonial to a woman hailed as the sparkling jewel of the polo circuit. Major Ronald Ferguson, her first husband, appeared quite untroubled as he listened to a warm tribute to Susan's love for Hector Barrantes, the man for whom she left him.

The Duchess of York wore a black gaucho beret decorated with a gold panther brooch, both gifts from her mother. She walked up the aisle with her estranged husband, the Duke of York, and their children, Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie. Behind the family, and the last to take their seats, walked the representatives of the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales.

It was a diplomatic nicety over which there had allegedly been some argument, the duchess having expressed a wish, it being a family occasion, to be the last to be seated. Protocol won in the end.

Senior royals rarely attend funerals or memorial services in person, and yesterday's was no exception. But the Duchess of Kent was present in a personal capacity, as was Sir Robert Fellowes, the Queen's outgoing private secretary, and Paul Burrell, former butler to Diana, Princess of Wales. The latter knew Mrs Barrantes from the days when her daughter and the Princess larked about together as fellow-conspirators against the royal establishment.



Susan Barrantes, who died at the age of 61

In an address, Lord Patrick Beresford, an old family friend and polo associate, said of Mrs Barrantes, who died at 61: "She radiated gaiety and beauty; we all adored her. Getting a smile from Susie at the Guards Polo Club was better than winning the tournament." He then quoted from the song *If You Knew Susie*:

There's none so classy,
As that fair lassie,
Oh, oh, oh, what a chassis.

With Major Ferguson and his second wife, also named Susan, listening in the congregation, Lord Patrick listed the highs and lows of Mrs Barrantes's life: a stillbirth in 1969, the collapse of her first marriage, the Falklands conflict, Hector Barrantes' polo successes, his cancer and his death in 1990, and a subsequent life dominated by mortgages, overdrafts and debt, through which her energy and enthusiasm never faltered.

Her switch of husbands, Lord Patrick said, happened within the polo circuit. "When Hector Barrantes lost his first wife in Argentina, we all wanted to console him. In so doing, *Susie fell in love with him, and he with her.*"

For all her financial worries, brought on by attempting to keep her Argentinian ranch going after her second husband's death, Mrs Barrantes remained outwardly an optimist: "She always gave the impression that she was about to find the rainbow's end," Lord Patrick said.

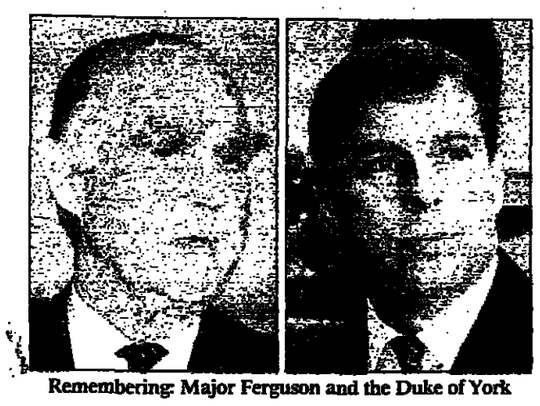
The service, although filled with traditional hymns, had its informalities. The duchess and her sister, Jane Luedecke, stood at the lectern together to read a passage on mothers and children by Robin Ewart-Biggs, and the closing lines of Kipling's *If*, which speak of walking with kings and not losing the common touch.

The duchess chose that herself. More solemnly, the Duke of York read from the Wisdom of Solomon, on the souls of the righteous being in the hand of God.

At the close of his address, Lord Patrick said that he had detected a sparkle in the eyes of the young Princesses reminiscent of their grandmother, who had been adored by her fellow dwellers on the pampas.

The service's closing moment would have been irresistible to all but the most flint-hearted. As the estranged Yorks walked out with their children, the organ softly played a few bars from Lord Lloyd-Webber's biggest hit. They cried a bit for Susie in Argentina; they like rollercoaster women there.

Memorial service, page 20



Remembering: Major Ferguson and the Duke of York

TOBY MELVILLE



The Duchess of York, with her daughters, in a beret given to her by her mother

Writers vie for new £30,000 non-fiction book prize

BY ERICA WAGNER

A NEW £30,000 literary prize funded by an anonymous donor was launched yesterday.

The first Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction — which will be open to the authors of all non-fiction books published in Britain, regardless of their nationality — will be awarded in June 1999. The first chairman of judges will be James Naughtie, the broadcaster and presenter of Radio 4's *Today* and *Book Club* programmes.

The prize will take the place of the defunct NCR Prize as the major award for non-fiction. Authors on the shortlist for the prize, to be announced in May, will receive £2,500 each from the sponsor, a retired British businessman and philanthropist.

Only British, Irish and Commonwealth authors were eligible for the £25,000 NCR Prize, which meant that such popular successes as Dava Sobel's *Longitude* could not be entered. Winners included Jung Chang for *Wild Swans*; Eric Lomax for *The Railway Man*; and Orlando Figes, whose book, *Russia: A People's Tragedy*, was the last winner before the sponsors withdrew their support last year.

The loss of the NCR Prize had meant that there was no major award for non-fiction books; the Whitbread Award, to be awarded in January, is only open to biographies.

The Samuel Johnson Prize will differ fromthe Booker in that the judges, to be chosen by Naughtie, will not read all the submitted book. A longlist will be chosen from submissions, which the judges will then all read. There will be no minimum number of books for the shortlist.

One of the primary figures behind the new prize is the literary agent Giles Gordon, who devised the NCR Prize. The steering committee, which is chaired by Stuart Proffitt, of Penguin Books, includes Charles Moore, the Editor of *The Daily Telegraph*; Peter Straus, of Picador; Martin Lee, of Waterstone's and Dillons; and Dotti Irving, of Colman Getty.

Duchess encourages schools to register for free books

BY VICTORIA FLETCHER

THE Duchess of York has disclosed her recipe for literary self-improvement: a diet of one classic novel for every two thrillers. The part-time talk-show host admitted that she was trying to improve her reading regime as she urged schools to support a campaign that will give free books to thousands of British schools.

The duchess encouraged schools to sign up to the Free Books for Schools offer, which will donate millions of new books to schools in exchange for tokens that will appear on Walkers crisps and in *The Times* from January.

Visiting St Michael's Church of England Primary School, in Sunninghill, near her home, one of 25,000 schools that has already registered for Free Books For Schools, the duchess said she was determined to improve the intellectual quality of the material she reads.

Top of her Christmas reading list is *Middlemarch* by George Eliot and *Portrait of a Lady* by Henry James. The duchess said: "I love a heavy thriller and I dip into lots of different books when I am travelling on planes. But for every two thrillers, I am now going to read one classic."

However, the classics are not a problem for her two daughters. Although the duchess said she often found it difficult to make Princesses Beatrice, ten, and Eugenie, eight, turn off the television and pick up a book, they read classic children's titles together every night from 7pm to 7.30pm. Among their favourite bedtime stories are *Jill's Gymkhana* and *The Night Before Christmas*.



Duchess: aims to digest more intellectual fare

However, the book that is presently enthralling the duchess and her daughters is *The Truffle Hunter*, by Inga Moore. The story is of a domestic pig that goes hunting for food in a forest, meets a wild pig and goes on an adventure during which they fall head over trotter in love. "It is wonderful," the duchess enthused. "It's a very nice moment when the TV's turned off and you read a story. It's important to make that time.

"You can role-play and it is almost a form of therapy, to get rid of the things that have happened to you in the day and drift into the lines of the book."

As a child, the duchess said she was inspired and enthralled by traditional titles, including *Alice in Wonderland*, *Peter Pan*, *The Wizard of Oz* and *Anne of Green Gables*. She said that, since her early childhood, she had loved to read the exciting and enchanting. "You have to make the time. And when you are a parent it is essential to shut that door to the outside and read to your children."

Schools will be able to register for the Free Books for Schools offer until February 28. Millions of books covering more than 150 of HarperCollins children's titles are available. Schools simply have to collect tokens that will appear on Walkers crisp packets and in News International newspapers from January. Further details can be obtained by telephoning 0845 6040312.

Valerie Woods, the head of St Michael's, said that attractive, new books always tempted even the most stubborn child to read. "We always need new books to attract young readers. The illustrations are so good nowadays that the pupils love it, we just do not have enough of them. To be able to get so many titles free, including beautiful new dictionaries and atlases, will help to feed their imaginations."

Limit may be put on embryo implants

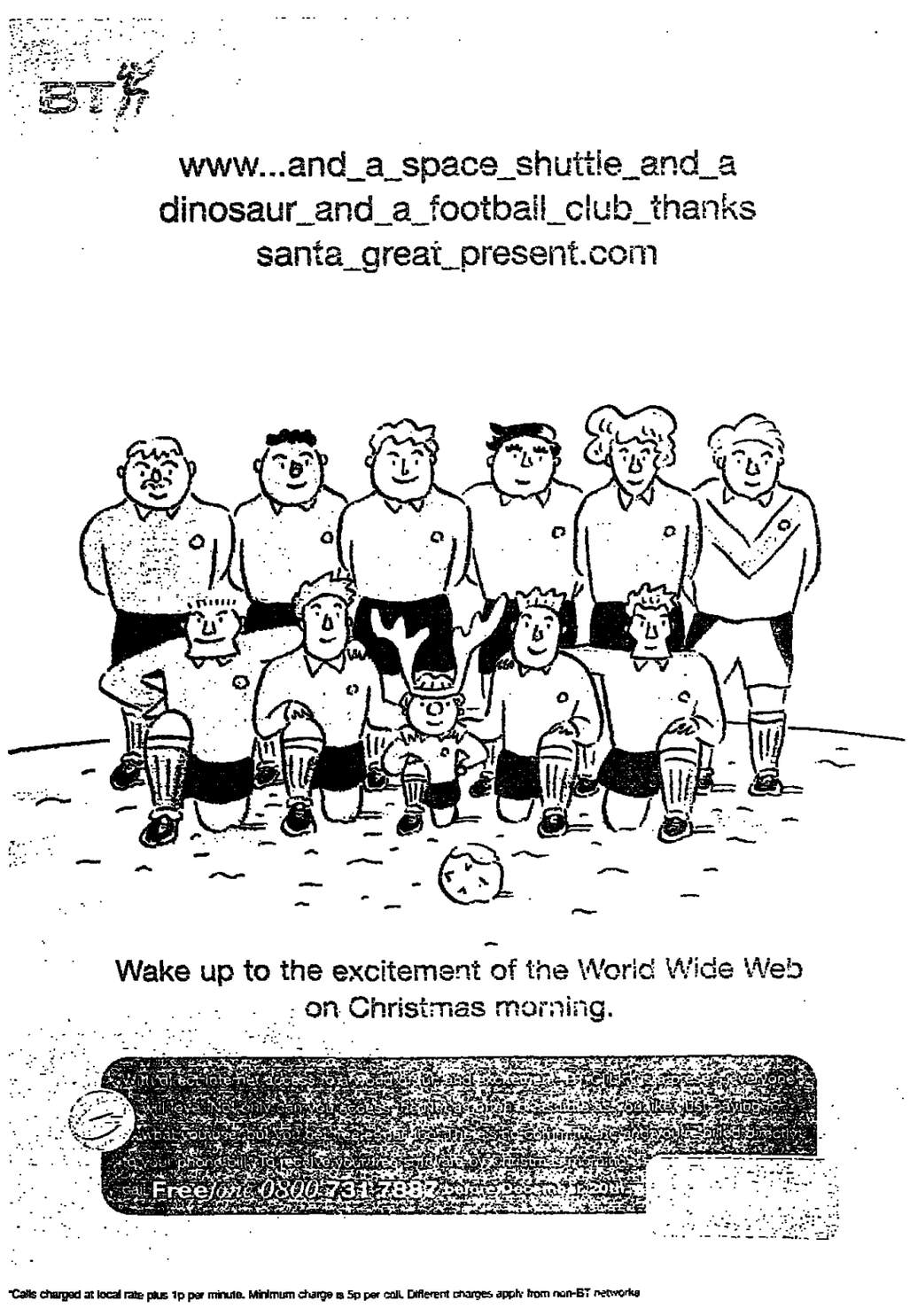
BY IAN MURRAY
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE number of twins, triplets and quadruplets born to women who have been given fertility treatment has more than doubled in four years and doctors are being advised to limit the number of embryos they transfer to patients using in-vitro fertilisation.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryo Authority highlights multiple births as the most worrying trend in its annual report published today. Of the 7,292 babies born from IVF, 3,417 (47 per cent) came from multiple pregnancies, which are associated with premature birth, low birth weight babies and a far higher stillborn or neo-natal death rate. Whereas 8.7 per cent of triplets die, only 1 per cent of singleton babies do not survive.

Under the present Code of Practice a clinic may implant a maximum of three embryos. The report shows that the chances of a live birth are only marginally greater for a three than for a two-embryo transfer but that the multiple pregnancy rate increases from 22 per cent to 32 per cent with the former. The British Fertility Society now recommends that two-embryo transfer should be the usual practice.

There has also been a huge increase in the number of babies born where the sperm is injected directly into the egg, which is particularly helpful for men with low sperm counts. Whereas the live birth rate from the method was under 4 per cent six years ago it is now more than 21 per cent.



*Calls charged at local rate plus 1p per minute. Minimum charge is 5p per call. Different charges apply from non-BT networks

Addiction to Internet threatens family life

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

NEARLY half of all regular Internet users admit that they are addicted, spending an average of 60 hours a week in cyberspace.

New research shows that even regular Internet users who do not consider themselves to be addicted spend an average of 28 hours a week online.

Helen Petrie, of the University of Hertfordshire, author of the report, said: "We asked people if they would rather be online than with their friends or family and very many of them responded 'sometimes' or 'quite often'. I think the implications for family life are serious.

"You hear of people who get home from work and lock themselves in the spare room with the computer, not to emerge again until six the following morning. This research seems to confirm that this image could be true," she said.

Dr Petrie, who surveyed 445 Internet users through a questionnaire placed on her Web page, said that the public health implications of Internet addiction could be serious too. Her findings were presented at the annual London conference of the British Psychological Society yesterday.

"I think that 60 hours may be an overestimation of the amount of time Internet addicts spend online — that's partly because you tend to lose track of time when you are surfing cyberspace," Dr Petrie said. "But you do have to ask: if they are spending more than eight hours a day on the Net, when do they sleep or eat or get any healthy exercise?"

About seven million Britons use the Internet. Dr Petrie believes that the Internet is so addictive because it delivers what psychologists call intermittent and random positive reinforcement. Unlike television viewing, which is usually a passive experience, Internet users get random highs and bursts of excitement each time they find something on the Net that surprises or interests them.

"You may see a page on the Internet that is not so interesting, so you go on to the next one, looking for excitement, then you go on to the next, and the next until you find something that gives you a buzz. This type of random intermittent positive reinforcement is the most difficult type of addiction to get rid of," she said.

For the purposes of the study Dr Petrie developed the Internet Use and Attitude Scale, which relates high Internet use to positive attitudes towards the Net. She found that people with high scores were far more likely to suffer from depression and introversion. This would seem to confirm the stereotype of Internet junkies as rather sad and lonely people with low self-confidence.

"It's difficult to tell whether you become depressed because you use the Internet or whether it's the other way round. If you spend a lot of time in chat groups on the Net or e-mailing people there is non-verbal communication and it is emotionally very flat. That could increase depression," she said. The research discovered that women were equally as likely as men to be Internet addicts and that the average age of addicts was close to 30.

Dr Petrie believes that Internet addiction can partly be put down to the novelty of the Internet and that, after more people have become more familiar with it, levels of addiction will fall.

Dr Petrie can be contacted by e-mail at H.L.Petrie@herts.ac.uk

Her Web page is http://www.phoenix.herts.ac.uk/sdru/



Heads you win: the downcast Alec Stewart's batting average for the Ashes series is 22.4. The upbeat Ian Botham scored two centuries in the 1981 series

Why Stewart's men should walk tall

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

CRICKETERS with a positive mental attitude, who walk tall, swing their bats confidently and look their opponents square in the eye, score more runs than those who are depressed and who walk slowly with their shoulders hunched and their hands in their pockets, a study has shown.

The results were most profound among batsmen, whose averages were found to improve by between 6 and 16 per cent if they were in a good mood.

Bowling performance appeared to be unaffected by mood, although there was some suggestion that long hours spent daydreaming in the outfield could lead to boredom, depression and the odd missed catch.

Peter Totterdell, of the University of Sheffield, measured the mood of 33 players from the Yorkshire first and second teams and from the Leicestershire and Durham first teams during county matches. Each cricketer was equipped with a Psion pocket computer on which they assessed their happiness, energy, focus, confidence, enthusiasm, effectiveness and tension levels before, during and after games, marking them on a scale of one to 20.

Additional readings were also taken before, during and after a day's play, measuring team communication and confidence. The only area where there was no clear link between mood and performance was tension. High levels of anxiety caused some players to do well and others to perform badly.

It also emerged that older, more experienced players and those with good problem-solving skills could have a big impact on their team-mates' performance simply by egging them on and by their positive facial expressions and body language.

Dr Totterdell said the research could offer profound lessons for England's beleaguered players. Players performing poorly with the bat in the Ashes tour, such as Alec Stewart (a batting average of 22.4), Michael Atherton (18.33), John Crawley (9.25), Graeme Hick (19), and Darren Gough (4.2), could stand to benefit most.

Dr Totterdell said: "If you can identify what emotional factors affect performance, then you can work out how to deal with them. For example, you can look at what makes them happy and what it would take to make them more focused." He told the annual London conference of the British Psychological Society that the England team needed long-term psychological counselling. It would not, he said, be a quick fix. "In the past people have brought in psychologists and expected them to perform magic. But psychology has to be practised in the same way as practise in the nets. You have to work at it."

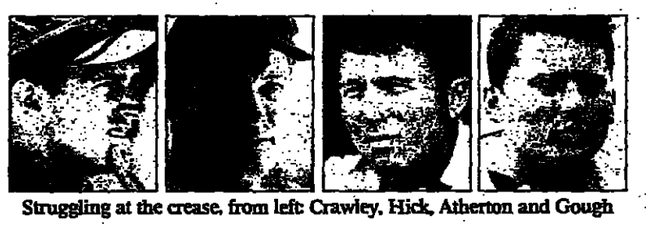
Steve Bull, the England team psychologist, who accompanied the team to the West Indies and to Australia where he worked with them as a group and individually until the first Test in Brisbane, would doubtless say that he had done that. He remained available to the team by telephone for the duration of the tour, although he left Australia when the series began.

Andrew Walpole, of the England and Wales Cricket Board, said yesterday: "He has his own practice and professional commitments to attend to, and to stay for the whole tour would have kept him away for a very long period."

Mr Walpole said Mr Bull had had "a very successful input into the team". Indeed, after the West Indies tour, Mark Ramprakash paid tribute to his help, and Nasser Hussain was also quoted as saying that the team psychologist had helped his concentration and mental discipline at the crease.

Dr Totterdell also suggested that those who run English cricket should take a long hard look at terms and conditions of employment. His study revealed that levels of mental strain among professional cricketers was significantly higher than the average for most occupations. "Work conditions are not very good. There is seasonal working, job insecurity, no long-term career prospects, long hours, physical work and long periods of boredom."

Would-be cricketers with a sunny outlook and a jovial disposition but no actual sporting skills should not get too excited, however. Dr Totterdell said: "Psychology alone is not going to make anyone into a great cricketer. It's what makes the difference when talent is equal and technique is the same."



Struggling at the crease, from left: Crawley, Hick, Atherton and Gough

Alan Coren, page 18

Virtue of broken homes

Teenage girls are happier living in single-parent homes with their mothers than in conventional two-parent families, according to new research.

Tony Cassidy, of Coventry University, told the society: "Mothers and daughters in single families develop a sense of sisterhood, cohesion and bonding. They become a mutual support system." But boys do less well in such homes because they feel controlled, demotivated and depressed.

Dr Cassidy believes that all parents can learn from the improved relationship between girls and solo mothers. "It's not broken homes *per se* that lead to problems, it's what happens after that. Parents need to look at how they relate to children of both sexes."

Smells bring back Gulf ills

The symptoms of Gulf War Syndrome can be reactivated by smells, tastes and sounds that remind veterans of war, Eamonn Ferguson, of the University of Nottingham, said. Diesel fumes at petrol stations, cars backfiring, or the smell of oil burning in a kitchen were all triggers, he said. Scientists have been unable to fully explain the cause and nature of Gulf War Syndrome. Its symptoms include fatigue, headaches, depression, muscle and joint pain, sleep disturbances, rashes and poor memory and concentration.

Danger of home work

Working from home is seen as the ideal, but the reality is stress and family conflict, according to a study.

The problem lies in the relationship between physical and psychological boundaries in the home, said Sue Lewis and Cath Sullivan, of Manchester Metropolitan University. The danger zones include rows about lost domestic space.

The Manchester team's presentation to the British Psychological Society concluded with the suggestion that the popularity of working from home might be a response to the fragmentation of modern society.

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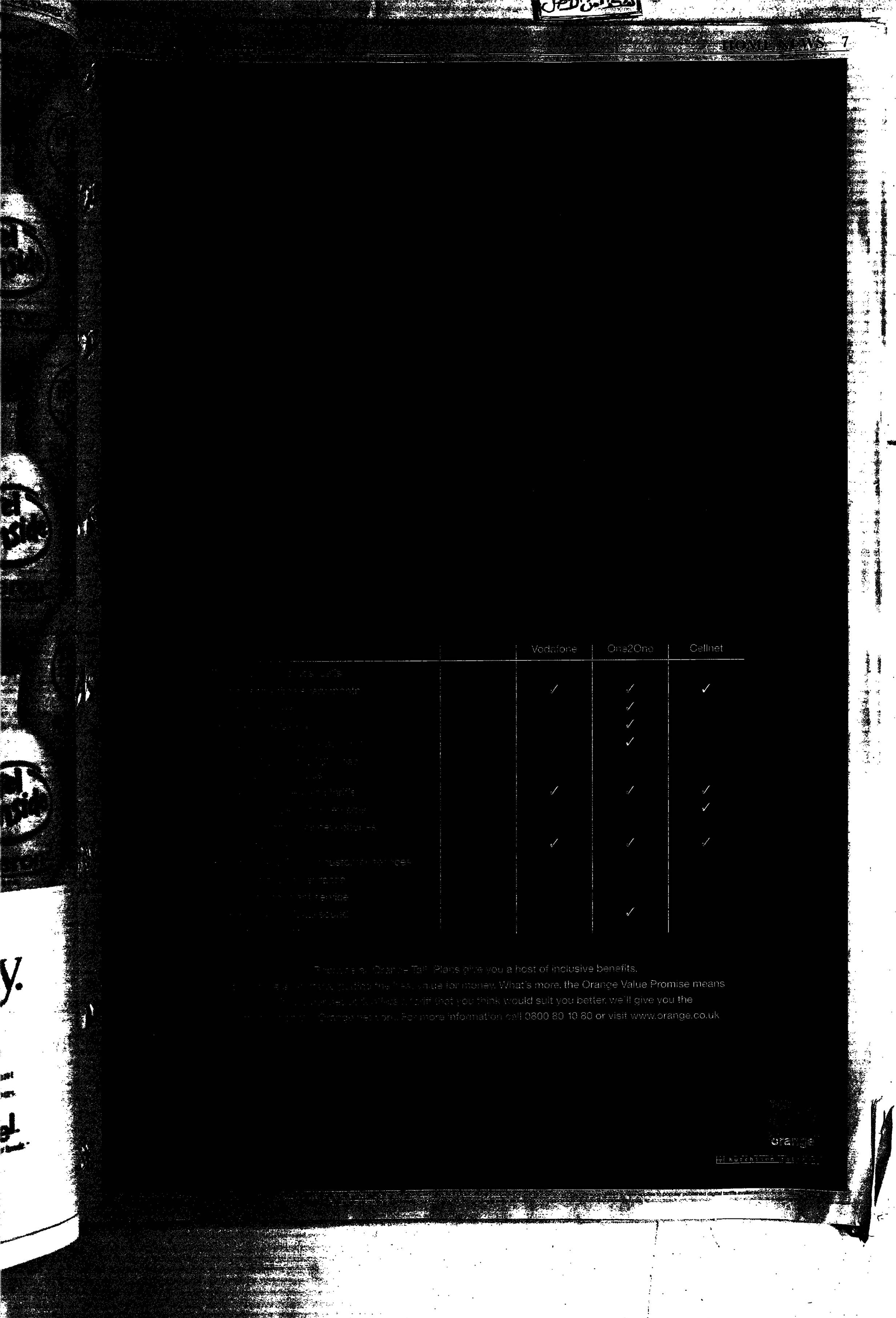


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Not in our front yard, say RA's neighbours

Arts and sciences clash over giant marquee to cope with Monet crowds, writes Michael Harvey

AN HISTORIC courtyard normally dedicated to the arts and academia was ringing with outrage yesterday. On one side was the Royal Academy of Arts and on the other several of the scientific societies housed around the elegant Burlington House quadrangle.

In the middle was the cause of the bad feeling — a large white marquee erected by the Royal Academy for its forthcoming Monet exhibition.

For nearly four months the *T-shaped structure will house* a ticket office, lavatories, bookshop and café for the expected 600,000 visitors to the exhibition. The sequel to the hugely popular Monet exhibition in 1990 opens to the public on January 23.

The academy has yet to receive formal planning consent for the marquee, but went ahead with erecting the structure after consultation with English Heritage and Westminster City Council.

The noise and disruption an*gered neighbours so much* that they have lodged a formal objection with the council. Leading the complaints is the Society of Antiquaries, founded in 1707. It promotes the study of history and antiquities, and within its premises has a library and lecture rooms.

David Morgan Evans, the society's general secretary, *said the academy had failed to* consult properly those affected by the marquee.

The marquee had ruined the sense of space and harmony of the courtyard, he said. "The structures are on too large a scale. The level of noise has at times been intolerable. In effect, the front-of-house operations of the royal academy have been moved out into the courtyard. This will affect the reasonable expectation of quiet use of our main committee and lecture rooms.

"We have some sympathy for the royal academy and its promotion of the arts but we wish they would engage their brains and address the issues. There is a real worry that this is the thin end of the wedge."

Mr Evans has received tacit support from Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, who has privately described the marquee as a "monstrous intrusion".

Tom Inch, secretary-general of the Royal Society of Chemistry, also criticised the Royal Academy. "Our patience is running pretty thin. If you were writing a textbook about neighbourly relations, they would not get very good marks," he said.

David Gordon, secretary of the Royal Academy, was dismissive of the complaints. "The members of the societies have got themselves into a state of high excitement but basically this is a storm in a teacup. They are nit-picking and the marquee is a temporary structure. We have had long discussions with Westminster City Council and with English Heritage and they have agreed that the marquee can go ahead. There is a formality which has to be gone through but we have been told that planning permission will be granted.

"For the Monet exhibition in 1990 we had hundreds of people spilling out all over the courtyard. The marquee is a way of ordering that and keeping disruption to our neighbours to a minimum. We feel we are being considerate."

Mr Gordon pointed out that the Royal Academy was planning to spend £3 million to refurbish the courtyard as soon as the money had been raised. It regularly uses smaller marquees in the courtyard for two or three days for receptions and other events. Westminster City Council's planning committee meets in the new year to decide on the Royal Academy's application.

The exhibition will bring together 80 of Monet's outstanding paintings from the 20th century. It will culminate in an "unparalleled" gathering of his last and perhaps greatest paintings — the monumental water lily panels. A group of seven, some measuring more than 18ft in length, will be shown including one never before seen in public. The show, entitled *Monet in the 20th Century*, is sponsored by Ernst and Young. It attracted rave reviews at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston where it opened in September.

The Monet exhibition in 1990 drew 658,289 people and this latest show will be just as important for the reputation, and the finances, of the Royal Academy.



TRICIA JOHNSON

David Morgan Evans, of the Society of Antiquaries, says the marquee has ruined the harmony of the courtyard



Sir Jocelyn: tacit support for critics of marquee

Migrant orphans get £1m to trace families

BY TIM JONES AND ROGER MAYNARD

MEN and women who were separated from their families as children by a cruel migration policy that led to some of them being sexually abused, beaten and used as slave labour are to be given government money to help them to meet their lost relatives.

The policy, which started in the last century and lasted until the late 1960s, resulted in about 150,000 children, some as young as five, being shipped from British orphanages to *provide former* colonies with "good blood stock and a source of cheap labour".

More than 10,000 were sent to Australia after 1947 to start a new life. Many of the children were told by state and voluntary guardians that their parents and families were dead or had forgotten them.

Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, announcing that £1 million was to be put in a fund to enable them to trace and visit their families, said the policy had been misguided. But he stopped short of offering a full apology for the misdeeds of past administrations. "On behalf of the Government, I offer my sympathy and sincere regrets," he said. "We have listened to the evidence put forward by people who have been scarred by their experiences as child migrants and pledge to help them trace their families."

The announcement was greeted with delight by Margaret Humphreys, a Nottingham social worker who has spent years unearthing horrific tales of starvation, beatings, sexual abuse and loveless lives.

But Mrs Humphreys, who founded the Child Migrant's Trust, said yesterday that action would need to be swift. "Unless we get on with this very quickly, sadly many child migrants will be returning to the graves of their parents."

Patricia Hewkin, 64, of Alfreton, Derbyshire, did not meet her younger brother until March this year: Colin Windsor, now 56, who had been in care, was sent to Australia when he was ten. He had thought he was being punished for being naughty.

Mrs Hewkin said: "My mother did not even know he was being sent away. When Colin was 12 he was sent with three other boys to a farm 600 miles from Sydney, where they had to milk a hundred cows twice each day and do hard manual labour after school."

£100,000 win for wounded tourist

BY SUE LAPPEMANN

A WOMAN who walked into an unmarked glass door in her holiday hotel room has won £100,000 compensation. Falling glass sliced off the tip of Sheryl Scarisbrick's nose, gashed both her legs and sliced her hand down to the knuckle.

Ms Scarisbrook, 30, an engineer, also complained that, despite having health insurance, she was taken to an unhygienic local hospital where her wounds were stitched without anaesthetic. She has reached an out-of-court settlement with Thomson Holidays.

She was on an £800 Egyptian package holiday with her boyfriend four years ago when she walked into the glass balcony door. Ms Scarisbrook, of Winsford, Cheshire, said: "There should have been a sticker on the glass to warn people it was there. The glass was too thin. It broke when I hardly touched it." Days after returning to Britain, she developed deep-vein thrombosis. She is now permanently scarred.

A spokesman for Thomson Holidays said: "Although this case has taken longer than we would have wished to resolve, we have reached a mutually acceptable agreement with our customer and we will continue to pursue this matter in Egypt with the hotel concerned. We take the safety and welfare of our customers extremely seriously and where possible will always take appropriate action to minimise any potential risks to holidaymakers."

THE TIMES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Cheetah's survival may depend on the Masai

FROM SAM KILEY IN THE SERENGETI, TANZANIA

HUNTED down by farmers protecting their livestock, East Africa's dwindling cheetah population depends for its survival on man — more precisely, the Masai. The nomadic pastoralists, researchers believe, might be the best protectors of the fastest animal on land.

Tom Maddox, 24, a doctoral student at London Zoo's Institute of Zoology and University College, London, recently won a research grant to study whether they are being protected by the Masai's killing of lion and hyena — the cheetah's biggest predators — outside the borders of the Serengeti National Park.

Almost three quarters of East Africa's game roams freely outside parks and reserves. Often, wild animals share grazing areas with Masai cattle and goats. Traditional Masai — and their cousins, the Samburu of northern Kenya — never eat game meat.

"We see it as unclean. If a Masai ate a wild animal we would never talk to him, he would become an outcast," said Alais ole Kaigil, 29, a Masai wildlife management area administrator. "We can smell when some one eats game meat from their sweat."

Mr Maddox, 24, was awarded £6,000 for two years of research, but the Serengeti Cheetah Research Project — one of the three charities in *The Times* Christmas Appeal this year — needs a further £70,000 to buy a vehicle and to help him and Sarah Durant, the project's director, to continue the world's longest-running study of cheetah.

There is an immediate need for Mr Maddox's work, which begins in the new year after a preliminary study in November. The Serengeti is home to about 200 of the world's 10,000 cheetah, but Dr Durant believes that there might be far larger numbers living outside the protected areas of the park. The park's population, which may be in decline, might rely on a "source" population that lives alongside the Masai.

The tribesmen hunt lion as part of a test of bravery, and kill hyena whenever they can because both species threaten their livestock. Lion and hyena, earlier research by the Serengeti Cheetah Research Project has shown, kill many cheetah cubs, only one in 20 of which survive to adulthood.

"We don't really ever hunt cheetah because they do not threaten any of our livestock," said Mr ole Kaigil, whose family roam northern Tanzania's Masai Steppe armed with spears to protect their herds from the *simbz* (lion). Little is known about the population of cheetahs outside the 3,000 square km park, but as the Masai control most of the land along its eastern and southern borders, they may be well placed to help to save it.

"Outside, there is the same ecosystem as inside the park, except you have Masai living alongside wildlife," said Mr Maddox, who has a first-class degree in zoology from Durham University.

"If the lion and hyena are in a [declining] population outside the parks, this would be good for the cheetah. As soon as this sort of information becomes known can then put in place systems to prevent anyone damaging it."

This may help the Masai, who are already seen as custodians of much of east Africa's game, to defend their territory against the spread of commercial beef and wheat farms by using the pulling power of the cheetah to draw eco-tourists onto their lands.

Cheetah Project Appeal

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'Man on the Hill' has mountain to climb

After 163 days, the protest at Drumcree goes on. This weekend thousands will try again to march down the Garvaghy Road, writes Martin Fletcher

IN ICY rain Harold Gracey, a silver-haired grandfather who is district master of Portadown Orange Lodge, performed the same ritual on Sunday as he had on the previous 22.

He attended the family service in Drumcree's parish church, then donned his regalia and led 300 Orangemen in a dignified procession down the lane that leads to Portadown via the nationalist Garvaghy Road. At a bridge across a stream three slate-grey armoured police Land Rovers blocked their way.

Mr Gracey formally complained to the officer in charge about this denial of the Orangemen's civil and religious rights. A colleague read a passage from Psalms through a loudspeaker and invoked God's help "as we take a stand here for God and Ulster". Most of the Orangemen then went home for Sunday lunch, but not Mr Gracey. He returned to the battered caravan behind the church where he has spent every one of the 163 nights since a huge military operation first barred the Order's annual Drumcree parade from the Garvaghy Road on July 5.

Summer has turned to winter, and the grass around his caravan has turned to mud, but the 63-year-old "Man on the Hill" has not once gone home to his wife. "If somebody had told me in July that I'd still be here at Christmas, I would not have believed them," Mr Gracey said. But he will not budge until the Orangemen complete their parade, and if he dies first "somebody else will take my place".


The Orange Order dug in at Drumcree on July 5

Over Christmas the Orangemen are planning an escalation of their protest in an attempt to overturn the Parades Commission's ban and march down the road before 1998 runs out. Already hundreds are gathering at Drumcree each night. As many as 10,000 are expected in Portadown this Saturday for the first of at least three rallies. The commission has given warning of a "very real prospect of major disorder" and several hundred soldiers and police officers are being drafted in.

Mr Gracey says that he deplores violence, but his protest has attracted loyalist thugs, sectarian bigots and virulent opponents of the Good Friday peace accord over whom the Order has little control.

The blocking of the original parade was followed by a week of Province-wide mayhem that subsided only when the three young Quinn brothers died in a loyalist arson attack. Since then there have been violent clashes in Portadown, during one of which a policeman was fatally wounded by a blast bomb, and repeated nocturnal confrontations between the demonstrators and security forces at Drumcree.

Tony Blair is urgently seeking to convene fresh "proximity talks" between the Orangemen and Garvaghy Road residents. The residents have not jumped at the offer. But even if the talks do take place, the chances of defusing the situation are slim.

Mr Gracey is adamant that the Orangemen must be allowed to complete their parade. His intransigence is more than matched by Brendan McKenna, the Garvaghy Road residents' leader, who is determined they should not. The Orangemen will not even talk to Mr McKenna, who was once jailed for his involvement in an IRA bombing of Portadown's British Legion hall.

For Mr Gracey, a retired storeman, the issue cuts to the heart of his Protestant culture and identity. His family have marched along the Garvaghy Road after their Drumcree service every year since 1807, when it was a country lane.

The parade is a "time-honoured tradition", not an exercise in triumphalism, he insisted in a rare interview. The Orangemen had agreed to march in silence, the houses on the Garvaghy Road were set well back and nationalists would have to "go out of their way to be offended" by a parade that would pass in ten minutes.

He said that, for years, governments had capitulated to the IRA and curtailed Protestant rights. "It's very important for Protestant people that someone, somewhere along the line, took a stand, and it just happened to be me." To the 1,500 who have signed the visitors' book in his spartan caravan, he is a hero. "Harold Gracey — True Loyalist", it reads. "Defiant Until Victory".

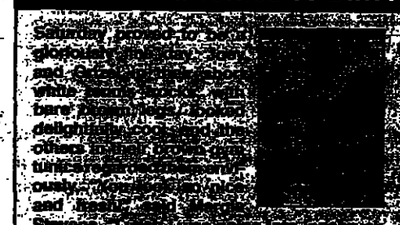

MARTIN McCULLOUGH

Mr Gracey will live in the caravan until the march is completed. If he dies before then, "somebody will take my place"

To countless others his stand has brought nothing but misery. Four people have been killed and many injured. During July's anarchy, scores of Catholic and RUC families were forced from their homes. The cost in policing, damaged property, lost tourism and investment runs into many millions of pounds. Portadown's traders say sales have halved, and the rally means they will be forced to close on the year's busiest Saturday. Mr Gracey appears insensible, or indifferent, to all of this. What little damage he accepts there has been "is not of our choosing", he says. He denies any responsibility for the Quinn brothers' deaths, insisting they were "drug-related". He regrets the police officer's death, but questions whether loyalists were responsible. He blames the recession for Portadown's lost trade.

He intends to eat Christmas dinner in his caravan, and anticipates the company of hundreds. There will be no peace on this patch of wretched and contested earth this Christmas, and even less goodwill.

FROM GYM TUNICS TO DIRTY WEEKENDS IN PONTEFRACT





Chalet Girls grow up disgracefully

BY SUE LAPPEMAN

A BOOK that updates the stories of the Chalet School girls into a world of sex, drugs and illegitimate babies has outraged a fan club dedicated to the original books and their author, Elinor M. Brent-Dyer.

The new book by Merryn Williams, *The Chalet Girls Grow Up*, brings the characters into the present day with references to Vietnam, Soweto, Greenham Common and the Falklands War.

But sexual references and innuendos in the book have offended The Friends of the Chalet School, which has harshly criticised Williams in its monthly fan club journal and called the book "derogatory".

Clarissa Cridland, the society's head, writes: "We should like to say that we had no idea that the finished book would contain such things as drugs, extra-marital affairs, illegitimate babies; and if we had known we would not have mentioned the book."

Brent-Dyer, a teacher as well as an author, wrote 62 books in the original Chalet School series. They were set in an archetypal girls' boarding school and the heroines all grew up to marry princes, dukes or doctors. The books became the most popular British schoolgirl fiction and still sell more than 100,000 copies a year.

Ms Cridland has refused to comment further on the dispute, but, writing in the newsletter, said: "We do not publish articles that are derogatory to Elinor Brent-Dyer or contain sexual innuendos or sexually explicit comments. Any story written in the Chalet School world has to be faithful to that world created by Elinor herself."

But the new book's author, who published the book herself, has defended her story and says that the appreciation society is overreacting.

"It is not an indecent book," Ms Williams said, "and anybody who read it would see that there are virtually no sex scenes compared to other modern novels.

"Some people don't like to see things change. They like to see the characters stay in a time-warp.

"I thought that it might be interesting to see what happened when the morality of the present day met the chalet girls."

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Save for retirement, earners told

Safety net in essential reforms will catch those who cannot afford to contribute, writes **Alexandra Frean**

WOMEN who take career breaks to have children, people caring for elderly or sick relatives, low earners and the disabled are the targets of the Government's pension reforms announced yesterday.

The basic state retirement pension will remain, supplemented by a compulsory state second pension for low earners and a non-compulsory stakeholder pension for middle and higher earners.

Announcing the reforms in the Commons, Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, said that the changes were designed to ensure that people who could afford to save for their retirement did so. "In turn, the Government has a responsibility to provide security for those who cannot save enough," he said.

He added that the case for pensions reform was overwhelming. "If we do nothing, one in three pensioners will, by the year 2050, be dependent on income support," he said.

Yesterday's Green Paper, *Partnership in Pensions*, follows research commissioned by the Government from the independent Pensions Review Group which forecast in June that up to five million people could see their income fall by more than half on retirement because their pension provision would be inadequate.

The state second pension will ensure that people on a low income get a total pension worth at least 20 per cent of average earnings, currently about £75 a week. All earners will be treated as if they were earning at least £9,000 when they retire. It will effectively mean that their national insurance contributions into the scheme rise from 4.6 per cent now to 9 per cent.

The state second pension is expected to be introduced in 2002. The current State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme will receive no new contributions after that date.

The reforms will also reward the 2.5 million who care for young children or sick relatives and about 1.5 million disabled people with a broken work record. Providing they meet certain conditions, they will receive credits into the state second state pension scheme paid as if they had an income of £9,000.

The Government will also encourage the one million people who are entitled to join company pension schemes, but have not, to do so. The five million people earning more than £9,000 whose employers do not offer a company pension scheme or who are self-employed will be encouraged to take a stakeholder pension.

Stakeholder pensions will effectively replace private pension schemes. People joining them will be able to opt out of the state second pension scheme and have their national insurance contributions paid into them.

Stakeholder pensions will not be compulsory, but there will be an incentive for people earning between £9,000 and £18,500 to join. This will be in the form of an extra rebate worth 9 per cent on the first £9,000 they earn and 2.5 per cent on the remainder.

Although there will be no incentive for the seven million people earning more than £18,500 to opt out of the second pension scheme, there will be a powerful disincentive to remain in it. After five years, under phase two of the reforms, the state second pension will be paid out at a flat rate, with contributions based on an annual salary of just £9,000.

All workers will receive an annual statement clearly stating how much they have paid in, what the charges are and what they can expect to receive on retirement.

Leading article, page 19
Body Blow, page 23
Commentary, page 25

HOW THE CHANGES WILL LEAVE PEOPLE BETTER OFF

■ A female graduate aged 22 gets a job paying £14,500. At 25 she gives up work to have a family. She returns at 35, earning £12,000 until 65. She takes out a stakeholder pension contributing 5 per cent of her salary when working. Now she would receive £32 a week from the State and £65 a week from a personal pension. Under the new system, her state pension would be £42 and her stakeholder pension £74.

■ A man leaves college at age 20 and works for the same employer until he retires at the age of 60 on £15,000 a year. He joins the company pension scheme, paying 10 per cent of his salary. Under the current system he would get £32 from the state pension and £119 from his company pension. Under the new system he would get £32 from his state pension and £134 from his company pension.

■ A man has a string of low-paid jobs after leaving school at 16. He never earns more than £8,500 a year. From the age of 60 he works part-time, earning about £4,000 a year until retirement.

He has no private or company pensions.

Under the current system he would get a state pension of £49. Under the new system he would get a state pension of £82.

ALBAN DONOHOE



Adrian Hill, who stopped work to care for his wife, stands to gain from the plans

Proposals will help those who can't work

THE CARER

Adrian Hill is one of the 2.5 million unpaid carers who stand to benefit. He gave up his job as a salesman in 1994 to look after his wife Karen when she became ill and bring up their three children.

Although he had a private pension plan and life insurance cover while he was working, Mr Hill, 35, had to cash in both policies and use up all of his savings in order to support his family after he stopped work. The family's only income now comes from state benefits.

Under the proposed changes, carers like Mr Hill will receive national insurance credits to the state second pension plan equivalent to those of someone earning £9,000 a year.

To qualify for the credits carers will have to be in receipt of Invalid Care Allowance or be caring for people receiving Attendance Allowance of Disability Living Allowance, who qualify for Home Responsibilities Protection.

What the proposals will mean for you

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

Q&A

THE Green Paper aims to increase state pension benefits for those earning under £9,000 a year and seeks to encourage those with no access to occupational schemes, and who make no extra provision, to take out cheap stakeholder pensions.

Here *The Times* answers some questions about what it will mean for you.

What is a stakeholder?
Millions of people on middle incomes want to save more for their retirement, but the current arrangements are often unsuitable or too costly. It is these people that are deemed to be stakeholders.

The new scheme should encourage these people who fall between the State scheme, occupational pensions and personal pensions, to save more for their retirement. They will tend to work in manufacturing, retail or the hospitality industries.

Most are under the age of 50, and roughly two thirds are men and one third are women.

What will happen to the existing State system?
At the moment, it comprises two elements, the basic pension and the State Earnings Related Pension (Serps). The basic pension, worth at present a maximum of £64.70 a week, will not be changed, but as it is linked to inflation rather than wages, its value as a proportion of earnings will diminish to one fifth by 2010, and to one tenth by 2020. Serps will be closed to new entrants, and will be replaced by a new state second pension.

The millions who have accrued benefits under Serps will get the benefits promised — many will end up getting a mix of the Serps benefits and the new state second pension.

Will the new second state pension be more generous than Serps?
Those earning under £9,000 a year will get better state pensions. According to the Department of Social Security, the changes will give four million lower earners a second pension of almost £50 a week.

It will also be slightly more generous than Serps for those earning between £9,000 and £18,500. Higher earners will receive no net benefit from the new scheme. The estimated cost to the Government of this new system is expected to be £5 billion a year by 2050.

What impact will the Green Paper have on people who do not have access to an occupational pension scheme?
According to the Government, around five million people earning around £9,000 to £20,000 currently make no extra savings for retirement. Ministers anticipate bringing in low-cost portable stakeholder pensions for this section of the population. Those taking out a stakeholder pension will get a generous rebate of national insurance contributions from the Government to put into the new scheme.

All companies that do not offer occupational schemes will have to give their employees access to stakeholder pensions.

It will be possible to contribute up to £3,600 a year tax-free to a stakeholder pension.

Employers will not be obliged to make contributions to stakeholder pensions on behalf of their employees.

The low cost and portability will be ensured through a system of benchmarks set by the Government. Stakeholder pensions are expected to be offered by the insurance industry through unions, and through other collective organisations.

What will be the impact of the paper on the 14 million people in occupational schemes?
Very little. The Government wants occupational schemes to continue to thrive, and for stakeholder pensions to run alongside existing schemes. The paper does not make it compulsory to join a company scheme.

What about the six million people who have personal pensions?
Personal pensions will continue as they are, but the Green Paper anticipates that as stakeholder pensions are expected to be more cost effective and flexible, many will opt for a stakeholder pension rather than a personal pension.



Brian Woodley

Looking back in anger

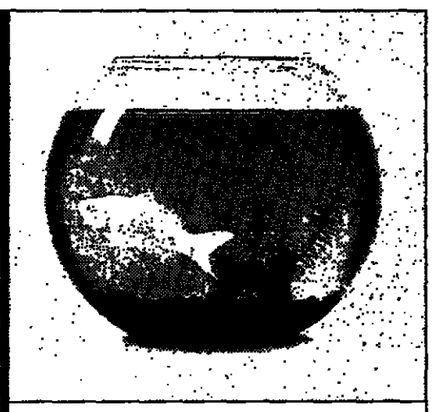
THE PENSIONER

Brian Woodley from Buckinghamshire is almost 66. He retired a year ago and is angry about the paltry £43.50 he is receiving from his state pension (Karen Woolfson writes).

He contributed to the pensions scheme for almost 30 years yet can afford only food, the electricity bill and part of the rent for a room that housing benefit does not cover in full.

Even if he were eligible for the full basic state pension of £64.70 he would get just 17 per cent of his former earnings.

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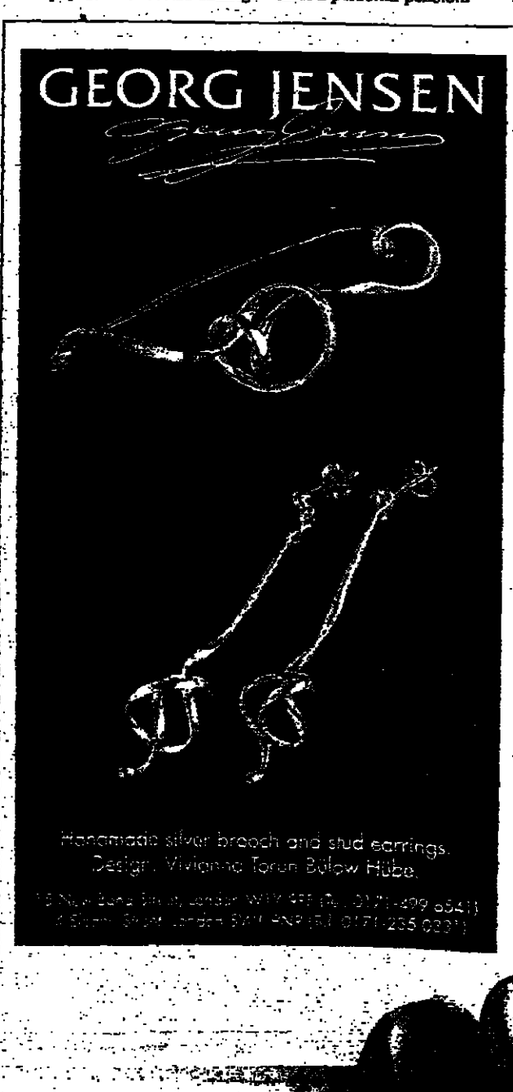
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Hammered silver brooch and stud earrings. Design: Vivianna Torun Bülow Hübe.

Millions sold short by failure to tackle flaws

Anne Ashworth finds glaring imperfections ignored in the pensions Green Paper

THE Green Paper on pensions published yesterday contains nothing to improve the lot of millions of workers, including the self-employed.

The proposals make no attempt to remedy various glaring imperfections in the pension system. The Government has chosen instead to focus its efforts on certain deserving groups, including carers and the low-paid. The overriding aim is to ensure that they do not become a burden on the State in later life.

Ministers have also taken the opportunity to take revenge on the life insurance industry, particularly for the personal pension mis-selling scandal. If the life companies wish to participate in the new stakeholder pension market for those earning between £9,000 and £20,000, they must lower their exhorbitant charges, which signifantly reduce the returns. The insurers must either redesign their pension plans, or concentrate on those earning more than £20,000.

Those companies that do decide to pitch for stakeholder business must be prepared for regular humiliation at the hands of the trustees who will run stakeholder schemes. These trustees will be obliged to represent the interests of their members. As such, they will be empowered to ask awkward questions about charges and performance. These are the sort of questions that holders of personal pensions would love to pose to an insurance company if they could only master the jargon.

There are a few clear winners and losers. Those earning less than £9,000 and those who are not entitled under current rules to pay into pensions because they are taking care of children or the elderly, will gain. They will be assured of extra comfort in old age through credits made on their behalf into the new second state pension. The losers would appear to be taxpayers who will have to foot a bill of £500 million a year for this measure.

Those earning more than £20,000, either working for themselves or someone else, have reason to be disenchanted. The document promises more consultation on retirement saving for the self-employed. This is a curious omission because they represent a suitable case for better pensions treatment. Government policies encourage people to enter contract or casual employment. Fluctuating earnings and insecurity means that these workers have a low level of pension provision.

The document proposes no improvements to the personal pension plans that will remain the only option for those without company pension schemes. Most of these plans offer poor value for money and lack flexibility. Perhaps the Government imagines that, learning of the low charges that will apply on stakeholder plans, personal pension holders will rise in rebellion against the insurers to force change.

The word "annuity" does not appear in the document, another strange oversight. When you retire you must use your personal pension or stakeholder fund to buy an annuity, a fixed-interest investment from which your pension will be paid. Currently rates on annuities are intolerably low, destroying the long-cherished plans of many new retirees. The Government has had ample time to provide alternative solutions. Ministers obviously did not realise that the necessity to purchase an annuity is becoming one of the greatest disincentives to investing in a pension, whatever your income.


PAUL COUSANS

Wendy Tyson-Charteris: "If I didn't have a big mortgage and childcare fees, I would put money into a pension"

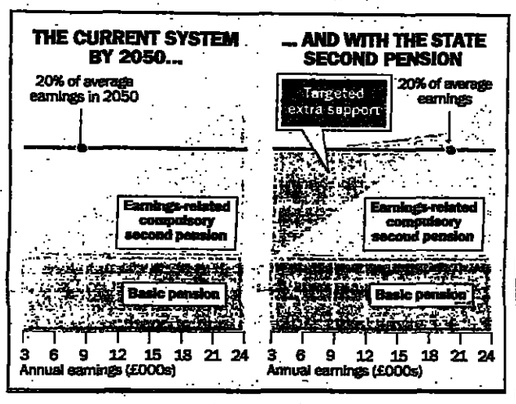
Flexibility the key for a working mother

THE SOLICITOR

Wendy Tyson-Charteris is 30 and married with a young daughter. She joined a firm of solicitors in Lancashire called Cockshott Peck Lewis after completing her training five years ago and is now on a salary of £24,000.

Her company has no pension scheme and she has not started one of her own. She said: "If I didn't have a big mortgage and childcare fees, I would put money into a pension, but I can't afford to put a slice of my money away without being able to get hold of it for 30 years. I put money into a PEP instead.

"I don't want to be told how to save. I would be very annoyed to be made to contribute a large part of my salary to a pension scheme, so I am relieved the Government does not intend to make this compulsory." She might start a pension scheme if the charges are low and the plan flexible, but would not invest more than £50 a month.



One small step down the long road to reform

Peter RIDDELL ON POLITICS

The long-awaited pensions statement is typical of this Government: well-intentioned, worthwhile, but not as radical as its advance billing. Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, is the epitome of the Blairite minister, non-ideological and pragmatic. Yet his reasonableness cannot disguise the fact that the current system is being modified, not replaced.

His aim is to provide security in retirement for those who cannot save enough, and to persuade those who can save to do so. Those who work should not have to depend on means-tested benefits in retirement, but the problem is how to encourage those on below-average earnings to save when they see people who do not receiving a similar income in retirement through the minimum income guarantee.

The dividing line within the package is earnings of £9,000 a year: below that level, pensioners' incomes will be boosted by the taxpayer; above it, by increased take-up of privately funded pensions.

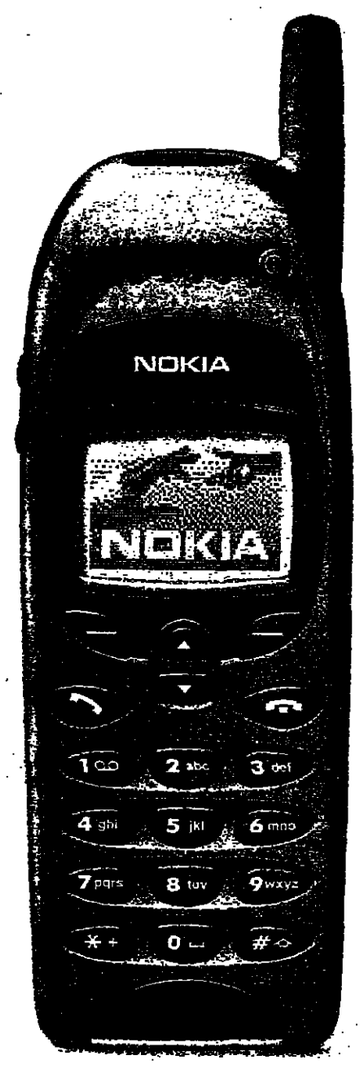
As already announced, there is to be a minimum income pensions guarantee. This will cost £250 million over the next three years, though the total will be much larger when the long-term aim of raising the guarantee in line with earnings is implemented. In addition, there will be a new, and more generous, state second pension replacing Serps, with the desirable inclusion of carers, some disabled people and mothers with young children. The scheme is aimed at those earning below £9,000 a year. This will cost taxpayers £500 million a year in the short term, so the net effect of the package is mildly redistributive.

Mr Darling persuasively argued that compulsion will not work for those on lower incomes who do not have the money to save. The question is whether the Government/taxpayer will be willing to provide enough money to keep up the new state second pension — they were not for Serps — to reduce the number of people on means-tested benefits. Iain Duncan Smith, the Conservative Social Security spokesman, has built up a strong case that the Government's welfare reforms have significantly increased dependence on means-testing. Several Labour MPs were worried yesterday that poorer pensioners have been offered a promise, not an assurance.

The Government wants to encourage the five million people earning between £9,000 and £20,000 a year who are not in an occupational scheme to take out new "stakeholder" privately-funded pensions. These are supposed to be more flexible and have lower charges. After long agonising, Mr Darling and Tony Blair concluded that compulsion is not at present practicable for those above £9,000 in view of public mistrust created by the pension mis-selling scandal. The Government also appears worried about being accused of imposing a new tax. So there will be tight financial inducements to persuade those earning above £9,000 to take out a stakeholder pension. This is, in part, compulsion by stealth. The package depends on people earning more than £9,000 saving enough while in work to provide themselves a decent income well above the new minimum guarantee.

The changes for lower earners are welcome. But Mr Darling will have to do more to answer the criticism made yesterday by Steve Webb, the Liberal Democrats' pensions spokesman, that the Government had taken "a small step in the right direction, but down a very long road".

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Serbian troops seal off border villages in hunt for Kosovo guerrillas

Tom Walker sees British monitors try to calm tensions after Kosovo ambush

BRITISH monitors in Kosovo were turned back from sensitive zones on the border with Albania yesterday as Yugoslav Army and Serb police units continued a mopping-up operation against guerrillas who escaped an ambush that killed 31 of their colleagues.

As the Kosovo Verification Mission's British contingent tried to calm anxious villagers, Richard Holbrooke, the American peace-broker, gave a warning to Serbs and Albanians to "stop playing with dynamite". The diplomatic concensus is that Kosovo's conflict has taken a turn for the worse, with fears that a bar massacre of young Serbs in the western city of Pec may spark copycat urban shootings across the province.

Another two Serbs died yesterday from wounds suffered after two masked gunmen, presumably Albanians, sprayed the Panda bar with automatic fire on Monday, bringing the total dead to six. Local Serbs held a march through the city, which Mr Holbrooke condemned as inflammatory. Shots were fired in the air, and stones thrown at US monitors. In Belgrade, the socialist party of President Milosevic said Pec citizens should have the right to defend themselves.

Diplomatic observers said that the Serbs were sealing off border villages into box-shaped areas, which they are combing in search of Kosovo Liberation Army fighters and arms and equipment brought from northern Albania.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mike Morwood, heading the British base in Prizren, said that a large KLA unit — the Yugoslav Army claimed it saw at least 150 infiltrators — had attempted to skirt the summit of Mount Pastrik early on Monday. After bumping into a Yugoslav border guard post, they attempted to retreat into Albania, only to be caught in an ambush on the mountain's northern and eastern slopes. Diplomats and observers who reached the remote area on Monday counted a bullet-ridden group of 25 bodies, apparently retrieved from a ravine, and another four bodies with bullet wounds to the head. Two other Albanians died in the initial confrontation with border guards, Serb sources said.

Southeast of the mountain yesterday, at Planeja village, British monitors, joined by European Union colleagues, attempted to piece together Monday's events. In arctic conditions they huddled over their Land Rover bonnets, and used Global Positioning Systems to locate villages on inaccurate military maps.

"I don't think the KLA guys knew these mountains well enough," said one monitor. "Those who survived have probably gone into villages looking for safety."

The Yugoslav Army occupied destroyed houses and shops above Planeja, their territory demarcated by a barrier constructed from a tree branch and a breeze block. "Go away," they said. "You're in danger here." Farther around the mountain slopes, north towards Ljubizda village, intermittent shelling could be heard as Yugoslav Army troops, backed by an array of fighting vehicles, moved through woods. Despite British protests, the area remained sealed off and many villagers fled.

There appear to have been no army casualties from the operation, the biggest border incident of the conflict. The Serbs are believed to have good intelligence, thanks partly to Muslim Slavs, or Gorans, who, while speaking Albanian, are often against the KLA.

Tall story by Nobel writer

Guatemalan Indian made up some of prizewinning autobiography, writes **David Adams** in Miami

IN HER autobiography the Guatemalan Indian rights leader Rigoberta Menchu, winner of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize, describes a harrowing tale of exploitation and genocide against her native people. The only problem, according to David Stoll, an American anthropologist, is that her story is not altogether true.

After nearly a decade of research, Mr Stoll's book, *Rigoberta Menchu and the Story of All Poor Guatemalans*, concludes that her much-hailed 1983 autobiography, *I Rigoberta Menchu*, which brought the author to international prominence, "cannot be the eyewitness account it purports to be, because it contains experiences she never had herself".

An investigation, published yesterday by *The New York Times*, reached the same conclusion. After interviews with family members and friends, the newspaper said that "many of the main episodes related by Ms Menchu have either been fabricated or seriously exaggerated".

However, there is little likelihood that she will be stripped of her prize, according to Norwegian officials who organise annual award. Allegations and doubts about precise details in the autobiography — including accusations that she hid a long-standing relationship with Guatemala's left-wing guerrillas — have circulated for years, and were well aired when her name surfaced as a Nobel candidate. The doubts did not dissuade Nobel officials then.

Geir Lunestad, director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute, told *The New York Times* that he was aware of the new research, but added that the decision to give Ms Menchu the 1992 prize was not based exclusively on her family history. Nonetheless, Mr Lunestad admitted that there are legitimate questions about the truth of Ms Menchu's life story.

For example, according to Mr Stoll and *The New York Times*, there is no truth to Ms Menchu's description of watching a younger brother die of starvation, as well as being forced to watch as another brother was burnt alive by army troops. Ms Menchu claims in her book that she never went to school when she was educated at two private boarding schools run by Belgian nuns. A land dispute central to her autobiography was, in reality, a long and bitter family feud, and not exploitation by wealthy landowners of European origin, as Ms Menchu has claimed.

She has already defended the autobiography, ghost-written by Elisabeth Burgos, a Venezuelan anthropologist, and based on 26 hours of taped interviews. Ms Menchu says any inaccuracies are the responsibility of Ms Burgos. "I am the protagonist of the book, and it was my testimony, but I am not the author," she told *The New York Times*.

Human rights activists have long been aware of the discrepancies, but have chosen largely to overlook them. Some activists argue that the truthfulness of her personal story is barely relevant given the overwhelming evidence of mass killings and brutality by the Guatemalan military in the period she describes.

"I personally would find [falsities in her story] very difficult to accept because of all the other things that happened in Guatemala. I don't see how it could be so false," said Alice Zachmann, founder of the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission in the United States.

Ms Zachmann and others regard Ms Menchu as a standard bearer for the cause of indigenous rights in Guatemala. They regard criticism of her book as nit-picking. For example, it is well established that both her parents, and at least one of her brothers, "disappeared" and were subsequently murdered by the Guatemalan military.

DAMIAN DOVARGANES / AP



Rigoberta Menchu, who is thought unlikely to lose her Nobel prize despite embellishing the story of her life

If her book contains embellishments, human rights activists say that is understandable. "What she described identifies with everything else that was going on in Guatemala at the time," said Ms Zachmann. If there is any lingering doubt about those events, activists point to a recent Catholic Church report, which documented army and guerrilla war crimes during Guatemala's 36-year civil war. The report, *Never Again*, was commissioned as part of the 1996 United Nations peace accords that ended the conflict, and described how 200,000 people — mostly unarmed Mayan Indian peasants — were killed or disappeared. It blamed the military and its paramilitary allies for nearly 80 per cent of the deaths.

According to Ms Zachmann, the peace accord has encouraged more Guatemalans to come forward with testimony about human rights atrocities during the war. "We have testimony upon testimony of what happened there. People are finally opening up to what went on. It was just horrendous," she said.

Leading article, page 19

WORLD IN BRIEF

Pope warns of cloning dangers

The Pope has issued his first warning about the dangers of cloning and gene therapy (Ruth Gledhill writes). In his World Peace Day message for January 1, the pontiff calls for legislation to control scientific research in this area and urges "profound change" in the modern, consumer lifestyle in the run-up to the millennium.

The Pope, writing days after the go-ahead was recommended for "therapeutic cloning", the use of human embryos to create tissues that can be used to cure diseases, is concerned that human life is being downgraded "to the level of a thing". Scientific research must be accompanied at every stage by careful "ethical reflection". This will lead to adequate "legal norms" to safeguard human life, the Pope says in his 5,000-word message, one of his longest.

Jospin calls for calm

Paris: Lionel Jospin, the French Prime Minister, appealed for calm after two days of rioting in Toulouse. Addressing youths who have rampaged through three areas of the city, M Jospin said: "This Government does not look at events with an ethnic view, but with a republican view where all have the same rights. But it is not by violence that these rights will progress." The riots were sparked when police shot dead Habib Muhammad, 17, the son of Algerian immigrants, during a car theft early on Sunday. *(Reuters)*

Cruise Britons safe

Miami: All 2,557 passengers, including 30 British holiday-makers, were led to safety from the cruise ship *Monarch of the Seas* after it hit rocks as it was leaving Philipsburg, St Maarten, in the US Virgin Islands. Royal Caribbean Cruises, which owns the vessel, said the captain sailed to Great Bay just beyond Philipsburg where he guided the ship onto sand in the shallows after water flooded three of its 18 watertight compartments. Arrangements are being made to fly passengers home. *(Reuters)*

Duma attack on Jews

Moscow: A leading Russian Communist told a parliamentary hearing that Jews were responsible for what he called the "genocide" of the Russian people. Viktor Ilyukhin, head of the defence committee in the Duma, the lower house of parliament, became the latest party deputy to make anti-Semitic remarks. He was speaking at a Duma committee debating President Yeltsin's impeachment. "Genocide" against Russians is one of the five charges the committee is considering against Mr Yeltsin. *(Reuters)*

Congo rebels kill 47

Kigali: Rebels in the Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire, have killed 47 Zimbabweans, including two colonels, in battles in the town of Kabalo in the southeast over the past few days, according to rebel commander Jean-Pierre Ondekane, speaking from his eastern stronghold of Goma. Earlier, the official radio in Rwanda, which backs the rebels, also reported the killing of senior military officers from Zimbabwe, which backs President Kabila. *(AFP)*

Killer cut baby from womb

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN WASHINGTON

A WOMAN convicted of cutting an unborn baby girl from a teenage girl's womb has been spared the death penalty and sentenced to life in prison.

The killing of 17-year-old Carethia Curry was "the most despicable crime that has ever occurred in this county", said Don Valeska, the District Attorney in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Curry was shot twice at close range in the head. She died instantly. Her baby, now two and a half years old, lives with her father.

During the trial, the prosecution claimed Scott, 31, became obsessed in her desire to have a third baby. She had two children but was no longer able to conceive following a hysterectomy three years before meeting Curry. She befriended Curry in 1995 on learning she was pregnant, lawyers argued, then murdered her after a visit to a pizza parlour and left her body in a plastic dustbin liner in a nearby ravine.

At the time of the murder, Curry was nine months pregnant. Scott had also claimed to be pregnant, and before the body was found she had shown off a baby to family and friends, telling them she had given birth to it. Sentencing Curry on Monday, Judge Gay Lake said the shooting was "heinous, atrocious, cruel and premeditated". But he followed the jury's recommendation to spare Scott the electric chair.

At a trial in September, a defence lawyer argued that the real murderer was Scott's boyfriend, who had already been acquitted of murder in a separate trial.

While Miss Curry's mother vowed to continue fighting for the death penalty "as long as God is on his throne", Scott has said she will appeal her life sentence.



Scott: judge spared her the electric chair

Mandela escapes

Johannesburg: President Mandela escaped unhurt when caught in a freak tornado that killed 13 people and left hundreds injured, officials said yesterday.

Mr Mandela was trapped in a pharmacy in the south-eastern town of Umtata when the tornado hit. Stan Mzimba, a local reporter, said that the presidential bodyguards thought there had been an outbreak of shooting and made the President lie on the floor before they lay on top of him for protection.

The ceiling of the pharmacy caved in. *(Reuters)*

American cities blame gun firms for society's violence

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

THE gun industry could face legal claims on the same scale as the tobacco companies under proposals drawn up by hundreds of American cities.

According to the US Conference of Mayors, about 70 per cent of its 500 members are planning to sue gunmakers, holding them responsible for violence in their communities. The mayors are examining the suits filed by Chicago and New Orleans earlier this year.

In Chicago the industry was accused of creating a public nuisance by selling guns that it knows will be used for crime and in New Orleans of knowingly refusing to supply safety mechanisms on firearms.

However, in a country where the right to bear arms is enshrined in the Constitution, the legal difficulties are not being underestimated.

"Guns are not inherently dangerous until a human being takes them out of the box and loads them, and guns are protected under the Bill of Rights. Those are two huge hurdles that the plaintiffs will have to leap," Jack King, a spokesman for the National Association of Criminal Defence Lawyers, told *USA Today*.

"The lawsuits will fly as well as a fat bird that doesn't have wings," said one litigation lawyer.

Last month four American tobacco companies agreed to pay $206 billion (£125 billion) over 25 years to recompense states for medical bills spent on smoking-related illnesses.

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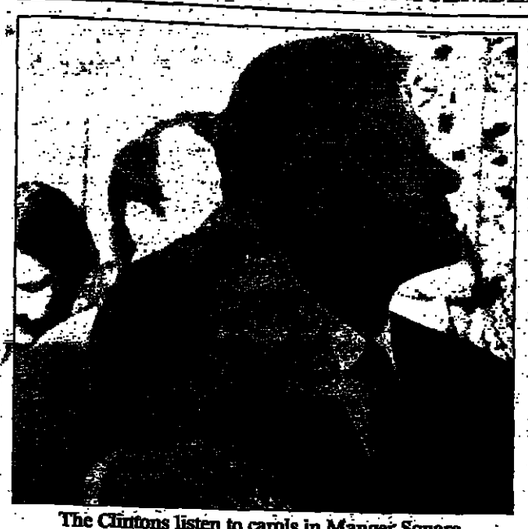
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The Clintons listen to carols in Manger Square

Arafat's hopes gift-wrapped in Bethlehem

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER

YASSIR ARAFAT, a devout Muslim, yesterday received an early Christmas present from President Clinton, whose second trip in 24 hours to Palestinian-ruled territory proved another bonanza for those demanding the right to a Palestinian state.

As the five American helicopters turned the skies over Manger Square into a scene from the Vietnam war film *Apocalypse Now*, the symbols of the growing Palestinian demand for independence were everywhere.

Looming over the square and the heavily guarded fourth century Church of the Nativity, which was the focus of the Clinton family visit, was a sign on one tall building, whose roof was once used by Israeli snipers guarding Christmas Eve celebrations. It said: "The Ministry of Tourism Welcomes Mr and Mrs Clinton in Bethlehem — Palestine." Windows all around were filled with posters of Mr Clinton and his host over the slogan: "Welcome to Bethlehem. We have a dream. Independence and peace."

Israeli suspicions that the Palestinian Authority has exploited the visit to further its case for statehood were strengthened by mass-produced signs with the slogan "We Have a Dream Same as Yours".

Those who met Mr Clinton reinforced the view that he is a strong private sympathiser with Palestinian aspirations to follow in the footsteps of the Jews, whose state was created 50 years ago. Anastasias, the black-bearded Greek Orthodox priest on hand when President Clinton fell to his knees in prayer in the tiny grotto where tradition has it that Jesus was born, said that Mr Clinton had been very good "for the eventual acceptance of a Palestinian state". Mr Arafat's wife Suha, born a Christian but a convert to Islam, appeared to have struck up a close relationship with Hillary Clinton, who is a local heroine because of her open support in May for Palestinian statehood.

"This is a very important visit. It shows we are not alone," Mrs Arafat said. She was holding her daughter, Zahwa, who wore a red Christmas suit and matching hat. To rub the point home, the Palestinian authorities had chosen the spot closest to Israeli troops guarding Rachel's Tomb, a sacred Jewish site on the outskirts of Bethlehem, to display a banner declaring: "Bill Clinton - Welcome to Palestine."

The Israeli press was filled with articles discussing President Clinton's *de facto* support for independence which dominated his trips both to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Hemi Shalev, a columnist, presented Mr Clinton as the Palestinians' Lord Balfour, whose historic declaration in 1917 paved the way for the foundation of Israel.

Apart from the call for prayer from a mosque as Mr Clinton's 20-vehicle motorcade roared into Manger Square, the stifling security was another reminder that Bethlehem is an Islamic stronghold, with Christians making up less than 30 per cent of the population.

As he lit the Christmas lights and heard carols from St Joseph's School — whose most talented singer was a 16-year old Palestinian called Mary — Mr Clinton was faced by four Arab children chained together. They held up photographs and demanded his help to release their relatives from Israeli jails.

Clinton leaves empty-handed

President's trip was failure, says Christopher Walker in Jerusalem

PRESIDENT Clinton last night ended a testing three-day Middle East peace mission, dogged at every turn by his impeachment problems, with no breakthrough in rescuing the land-for-security peace deal he brokered in October.

Israeli security chiefs are predicting renewed Palestinian street violence in protest against the mission's failure. Three Palestinian youths were wounded when shot by Israeli troops as they rioted near Bethlehem yesterday.

Mr Clinton, hailed as a hero by the Palestinians who said that his visits to self-rule areas had vindicated their claims to statehood, also left US-Israeli relations at their lowest ebb for years.

Israeli Government fury erupted after Mr Clinton chose, during his tour of Gaza, to draw a comparison between children of Palestinians imprisoned in Israeli jails — who are campaigning for the release of their fathers — and children of innocent Jews murdered by Arab terrorists.

According to the Tel Aviv daily *Yediot Aharonot*, Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, vented his anger to Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, and also brushed off her suggestion that a Palestinian vote to eliminate clauses in their covenant vowing to destroy Israel should deserve some reciprocal gesture.

"What kind of equation is that," Mr Netanyahu asked of the President's remarks, which shocked many Israelis. "How can you compare between the child of a murderer sitting in a jail and a child whose father was murdered and will never be able to see him again?"

Mr Netanyahu, who has done little to disguise his anger at what is seen as the pro-Palestinian bias of Mr Clinton's approach, added: "You are asking us to release prisoners with blood on their hands. Are you willing to release the terrorists who carried out the attacks on the Twin Towers in New York?"

Yediot Aharonot said of events on Monday, which resulted in an Israeli refusal to attend a meeting with Mr Clinton and Yassir Arafat, the Palestinian leader, subsequently held yesterday morning: "At the end of the day which will be remembered as one of the most important days in the development of the Palestinian nationalist movement, bad blood remained between the Israeli and American decision-makers."

At yesterday's ill-tempered summit, which was eventually held under US pressure at the Erez crossing point between Israel and Gaza, Mr Netanyahu refused to go ahead with Friday's pullback from a further 5 per cent of the West Bank as agreed at Wye in October.

His office produced a list of 12 alleged violations of the deal, or unfulfilled obligations under it, which the office said the Israeli leader had handed to Mr Clinton and Mr Arafat.

Mr Netanyahu said that he would withdraw troops from more of the West Bank only if the Palestinians fulfilled their side of the deal. He said they would have to drop plans to declare a state unilaterally in May, agree to Israel's criteria for the release of prisoners and confiscate illegal weapons.

Left-wing opposition politicians accused him of adopting an extreme line and wrecking the Wye accord in an attempt to secure right-wing support when he faces a crucial vote of no confidence next Monday. If his 61-59 majority is diminished he will be forced to call early elections next year.

Before leaving, Mr Clinton tried to convince selected US correspondents that his trip had achieved his aims. But those claims were disputed even by members of his own entourage who have been frustrated by what they see as the possibility of more street violence in the West Bank.

"I have achieved what I came here to achieve," the President said in reference to the Wye deal stalemate. "I do think we are back on track again. I am quite hopeful."

In another briefing for US correspondents, Sandy Berger, his National Security Adviser, felt that he had to qualify the President's over-confident remark about the peace process by saying with a smile: "It is a bumpy track."

Commenting on the failed summit, the Palestinian peace negotiator Nabil Shaath said of the Israeli delegation: "They came with the absolute intention of destroying it [the meeting] as a chance for again saving the peace process."



BLAKE SELL / REUTERS

President Clinton gestures towards the Dead Sea from the ancient cliffs of Masada, accompanied by Binyamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara

President's brother bitten by 'doggie-gate' court case

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN WASHINGTON

JUST when the Clinton family must have thought things could not get any worse, the President's half-brother has been told to pay $1,285.10 (£755) to a Los Angeles man who sued him over a fight between their dogs.

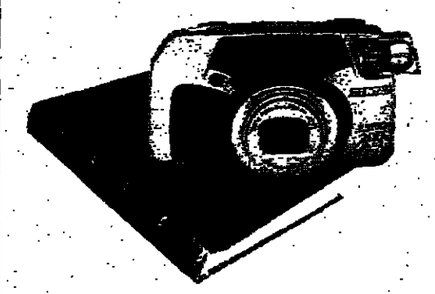
Roger Clinton, who has known both drug and money trouble in his time, lost his court battle on Monday with a tree-trimmer who claimed he had been bitten while trying to separate the two pets. Jeff Klempan said the fight was Mr Clinton's fault because his dog ran out of his house without a leash and opened hostilities. Mr Klempan claimed compensation for medical bills, lost wages, pain and suffering.

His lawyer accused the First Brother of trying to drag the case out into "doggie-gate" by demanding a trial and filing a counter-suit seeking $300,000 in damages for the mental anguish of watching the dogs fight.

The jury apparently decided that Mr Clinton's real anguish came from watching his sibling flounder in a separate spat in Washington.

The episode adds to Roger Clinton's woeful record with the law. A confessed cocaine addict, he served 18 months in jail. As an aspiring pop star, his last album was called *Nothing Good Comes Easy*, and was apparently prophetic. It bombed.

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Al-Magrahi, left, and Khalifa Fhimah, the Libyan suspects facing Lockerbie bombing charges

Libyan parliament backs trial deal

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

A TRIAL of the two Libyan Lockerbie suspects in The Hague moved a step closer yesterday with the announcement by Libya's parliament that it was "satisfied" with the arrangement reached between Britain, America and Libya.

At a desert meeting ten days ago, Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, told Kofi Annan, the United Nations Secretary-General, that any arrangement for a trial in a third country would have to be approved by the Libyan People's Congress.

However the body, which has little independent power, did not specifically say whether the two men, Abdel Basset Ali al-Magrahi and Lamine Khalifa Fhimah, should be extradited to stand trial in The Hague.

It also called on Britain and America to remove the remaining "obstacles", without specifying what they were. Libya has been insisting that any prison sentence must be served in Libya, not Scotland, although Britain and America have ruled out such an option.

The Foreign Office described the parliament's statement as "encouraging" but "very partial". A spokesman noted that Libya had still not given a formal response, and said Britain did not see any remaining obstacles to a trial. "At this stage we have to keep an open mind," he said.

The State Department in Washington voiced scepticism towards the Libyan move, however, and called for an end to "ambiguous rhetoric" from Tripoli. "We are still trying to get a clear sense of what it means," an official said.

Mr Annan said in New York yesterday that he was encouraged by reports of the Libyan parliament's response but more details were needed. He planned to hold talks with Libya's Ambassador to the UN.

The People's Congress, which meets only two or three times a year, does not have the authority alone to approve any deal. The plan must be submitted to 3,000 separate meetings of the Basic People's Congress, which represents each Libyan district.

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'God's banker' to be exhumed in new inquiry

Mafia moles have cast doubt on verdict of suicide, writes **Richard Owen**

ON THE orders of a Rome judge, Italian police will today exhume the body of Roberto Calvi, the Mafia-linked financier found hanging under Blackfriars Bridge in London 16 years ago, in a new attempt to establish whether he committed suicide or was murdered.

Calvi's son Carlo, a banker who lives in Montreal, yesterday said he would be present when Calvi's coffin is removed from the family vault in the village of Drezzo, 60 miles from Milan, near Lake Como. Signor Calvi said pathologists would begin examining the remains tomorrow. He said he had agreed to the exhumation because he was convinced that new evidence from Mafia supergrasses, or *pentiti*, indicated that his father had not taken his own life — as concluded at the time — but had been killed because he knew too much about the Mafia's money-laundering schemes and its links with the Vatican.

Calvi, known as "God's banker" because of his close ties with the Vatican, was also a member of the illegal P2 masonic lodge, which involved leading members of the Italian establishment. He was placed under house arrest and charged with fraud after the collapse in June 1982 of the Banco Ambrosiano, of which he was chairman.

The bank, which crashed with debts of $1.5 billion (£892 million), had been involved with the Vatican Bank, properly known as the Institute for Religious Works. Calvi fled to London, where he allegedly tried in vain to persuade Italian Mafia contacts to help to rescue the failed bank.

The first inquest into his death, by a London coroner, concluded that he had become suicidal after failing to salvage the bank from the wreckage of the scandal, and had hanged himself in his grey suit (but tieless) from Blackfriars Bridge on June 18, 1982, after stuffing his pockets and the front of his trousers with 12lb of bricks. The coroner detected no sign of violence.

Subsequent inquests in Milan concluded that murder could not be ruled out. Last year Rome prosecutors investigating unconnected Mafia activities as part of a crackdown on organised crime said they had new evidence to show Calvi had been killed, and asked for his remains to be exhumed. The focus of the new investigations is a Sardinian mafioso named Flavio Carboni, who has admitted being in London with Calvi, and who was subsequently sentenced for selling the contents of Calvi's briefcase to a Czech bishop, Pavel Hnilica.

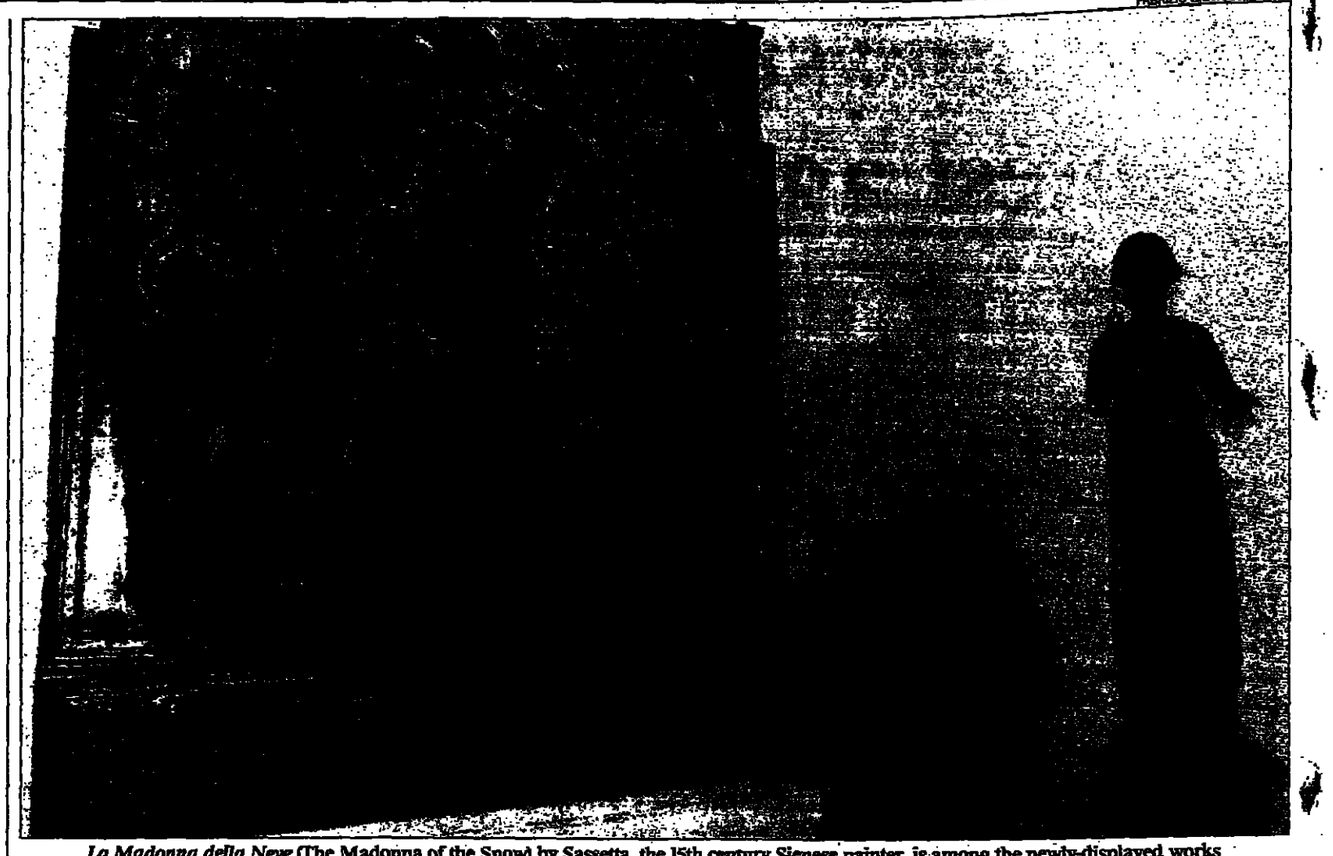


Calvi: body was hanging from Blackfriars Bridge

Monsignor Hnilica admitted using the institute's funds to buy the Calvi papers, but said he had done so because Carboni had promised they would help to clear the Vatican of blame for the Banco Ambrosiano scandal.

The papers have since gone missing. Press reports say they in fact related to money-laundering activities, and to Calvi's links with Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, the Chicago-born head of the Vatican Bank (now in retirement), Michele Sindona, a financier who was jailed for fraud in 1980 but was poisoned while in prison, and Licio Gelli, the extreme right-wing Grand Master of P2, who this summer escaped to France while awaiting an appeal against a criminal conviction but has since been extradited back to Italy.

According to police, Mafia *pentiti* have claimed that Carboni was part of the plot to kill Calvi, together with Pippo Calo, the former financial brains of the Mafia, nicknamed "The Cashier", who is in jail; Vicenzo Casillo, a Naples Mafia boss, now dead; and Francesco Di Carlo, better known as "Frankie the Strangler", who is alleged to have kidnapped Calvi at his flat in Chelsea, strangled him on a boat moored on the Thames, and then hung him from scaffolding under Blackfriars Bridge. Di Carlo has confirmed to police that Calvi was murdered, but denies he was the killer.



FABRIZIO GIOVANNOZZI / AP

La Madonna della Neve (The Madonna of the Snow) by Sassetta, the 15th century Sienese painter, is among the newly-displayed works

Uffizi shows off hidden treasures

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN FLORENCE

THIRTY spectacularly restored rooms in the renowned but cramped Uffizi Gallery will be opened to the public today for the first time since the 16th century, displaying medieval and Renaissance masterpieces which for years have languished in dusty storerooms.

Giovanna Melandri, the Italian Minister of Culture, said the restoration would double the amount of space at the gallery, which is under siege daily from tourists. It also suffered a bomb attack five years ago, when Mafia terrorists targeted it in an unsuccessful campaign of intimidation during a crackdown on organised crime.



FABRIZIO GIOVANNOZZI / AP

Fine arts chief Antonio Paolucci examines Bernini's *Martyrdom of St Lawrence*

The new galleries include rooms damaged in the Mafia attack, and now restored. Antonio Paolucci, Superintendent of Fine Arts in Florence, said the Uffizi's "rebirth" had cost nearly £10 million, much of it raised by lottery funds. He said Florence hoped to raise another £10 million for further improvements. *La Stampa* noted that "inestimable treasures" which had been kept in "infinite limbo" and only made available to scholars by appointment were now on show.

The newly-displayed works are largely drawn from the Contini-Bonacossi collection, which has been kept in store and in a wing of the Pitti Palace, across the Arno. The collection includes a sculpture of the Martyrdom of St Lawrence by Bernini, Madonnas by Cimabue, Andrea del Castagno and Stefano di Giovanni Sassetta, and a St Jerome by Giovanni Bellini.

The new rooms occupy the ground and first floors of the Uffizi, designed in 1560 by Giorgio Vasari as government offices for the Grand Dukes of Tuscany (*uffizi* means offices). The building was damaged by Nazi mines in 1944 and by floods in 1966, as well as by the Mafia bombing of 1993.

In recent years the rooms were used for storage by the state archives. But partitions have been removed and the original 16th century frescoes have been uncovered beneath layers of institutional plaster and whitewash.

The Contini-Bonacossi collection was formed in the 1930s by Count Augusto Contini-Bonacossi, a senator under the Fascist regime of Benito Mussolini, and his wife Donna Vittoria, on the advice of noted connoisseurs such as Bernhard Berenson and Roberto Longhi. After the Second World War the count's heirs were allowed to sell some of the choice pieces — including a Crucifixion by Bellini now in the Louvre — on condition that they donate the rest to the Italian state.

Anna Maria Petrioli-Tofani, the director of the Uffizi, said the gallery's 18th century Biblioteca Magliabechiana would revert to its original use as an art library, with 60,000 volumes. She said the gallery had to cope with 1.5 million visitors a year, compared with only 100,000 in 1950, and was "bursting at the seams", despite a new system of booking intended to ease long queues.

Officials said the next step would be the construction of an underground car park, for which leading architects, including Sir Norman Foster, have submitted designs.

Parrot proves he is no bird-brain among the chattering classes

Research finds intelligent Alex as clever as dolphins and monkeys, writes **Ben Macintyre** in Paris

PARROTS are as intelligent as monkeys and dolphins — and a lot more talkative — according to a scientific report published this week in France.

Irene Pepperberg argues, in an article for the French journal *Pour La Science*, that parrots can classify objects by type, form and colour, combine words, grasp abstract concepts and conduct meaningful conversations.

As proof of their intelligence, Dr Pepperberg cites the case of English-speaking Alex, a garrulous 22-year-old grey parrot who may well be the brainest bird in history.

Alex can identify and describe more than 100 objects, and when he gets into his conversational stride he hardly draws breath.

"Every evening, when we leave the laboratory, Alex says to us: "Good night. I'm going to dinner. See you tomorrow," writes Dr Pepperberg, of Arizona University." After two decades during which she has worked with Alex, he has shown that he understands human language.

"If communication is a sign of animal intelligence, Alex has demonstrated that parrots are as intelligent as the large monkeys and dolphins," she writes.

The parrot's ability to reclassify objects according to different criteria, such as colour or shape, and his understanding of the words similar and different, is evidence of a capacity for "abstract thought" hitherto believed to be limited to humans and certain primates.

Presented with two objects, the parrot can identify what properties they have in common. If they have none, he is dismissive, squawking "none" in an aggrieved tone.

The parrot can also count to six and subtract in his head. "When we present Alex with between two and six objects and ask him questions about the number of things with a given colour or form, his replies are 83.3 per cent correct; adult humans, given a very short time to quantify a similar assembly of objects, get it right in roughly the same proportion," Dr Pepperberg writes. In intelligence tests, Alex obtains results similar to those for large monkeys and dolphins, while his ability to identify the difference in size between objects also indicates an intelligence that goes well beyond the mere imitation of humans.



'He can identify over 100 objects and, once in his conversational stride, hardly draws breath'

Alex can group objects by colour, material (wood, stone, and paper, for example) and shape (round, square, hexagonal and so on).

More intriguingly, he knows that an object may have more than one property and can thus be classified in different ways: in response to questions about shape, colour and material, Alex accurately classifies objects 80 per cent of the time.

Alex is currently studying the relative spatial concepts of above and below.

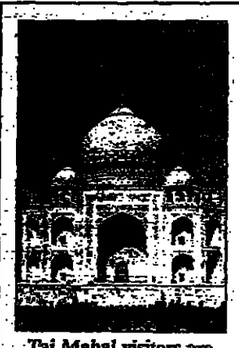
The brain structure of parrots is very different from that of other avifauna such as songbirds, which have a broader vocal range but cannot make small talk for peanuts.

Parrots, in common with primates, form complex social groups in their native jungle habitats, which may explain their innate cognitive abilities.

Grey parrots can live to the age of 60 and, in the prime of his life, Alex's vocabulary, conceptual abilities and conversational skills are still growing.

"With every new word he learns, Alex confirms that parrots are capable of carrying out complex cognitive tasks," according to Dr Pepperberg.

"His talents reflect the innate capacities of parrots and suggest that advanced forms of animal intelligence have yet to be discovered."



Taj Mahal visitors are targeted by con men

Trickery at Taj Mahal

Lucknow: India's Government has issued warnings to foreign tourists visiting the Taj Mahal city of Agra, after a spate of con tricks and robberies.

"The most important thing the foreigners should guard against is being lured by unscrupulous guides," a senior tourism official, K.K. Shrestha, said, citing an incident last month when an Italian couple were taken to a restaurant by a tout.

They were fed drugged food, and all their belongings, including cash, cameras and credit cards, were stolen. (*AFP*)

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Killings spark protest against Iran hardliners

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

A BACKLASH by Iranian moderates over the murder of dissidents spilled on to the streets of Tehran yesterday when more than 1,000 university students called for the dismissal of the chief judge and the heads of the intelligence and security services.

Their unprecedented protest came after the funeral of Muhammad Mokhtari, a dissident poet who was found strangled last week. He was mourned by thousands of writers and artists, some of whom had been in hiding in recent days, terrified they were on a hit list.

Earlier, leading hardliners claimed that a foreign "network" was to blame for the deaths of three secular writers and two dissidents in the past month. The conservative-controlled judiciary announced several people had been arrested. The country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, hinted at American involvement, while others blamed Israel and the People's Mujahidin, an exiled opposition group.

But the students made clear they suspected the killers were given a free rein by hardliners who control Iran's "power ministries". In addition to the killings, vigilantes have broken up pro-democracy street demonstrations and attacked liberal newspapers while the security forces stood by.

"Why don't you tell people who are committing these acts," demanded Alireza Siyasi, a student leader. He added: "Our peaceful demonstrations have been attacked and our friends beaten, but no security institution ever identified any aggressor. The people want answers."

The rally ended with a resolution read to the crowd calling for the dismissal of Ayatollah Muhammad Yazdi, the judiciary chief, Dorri Najafabadi, the intelligence chief, and Brigadier General Hedayat Lotfian, head of the security forces.

The mourners were understandably more cautious. One of Iran's best known writers, Mahmoud Dowlatabadi, warned them against turning the funeral into a political rally which he said could be misinterpreted in the tense political atmosphere.

Many Iranians believe the deaths are the work of hardliners who feel their power base is threatened by reforms advanced by President Khatami, a moderate who won 80 per cent of the vote in last year's elections and who remains immensely popular. The rule of law, freedom of expression and democracy are at the heart of his vision of a civil society. Despite determined opposition, Mr Khatami has fostered a relatively liberal cultural and political atmosphere, encouraging many Iranians to believe their country was at a decisive turning point as it prepares to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in February.

Such hopes have been drastically undermined by the attacks on the country's secular intellectuals, which mark the worst violence since the early years of the revolution. Many fear increasingly outspoken Islamic critics of the regime will be targeted next. Mr Khatami was quick to condemn the killings, but there was silence until this week from his political opponents.

Leading article, page 19

BEHROUZ MEHRI /AFP



Siavash Mokhtari, son of the murdered poet, comforts his mother Maryam at the funeral in Tehran yesterday

Chechnya declares state of emergency

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

AS DETAILS about the murder of the four Western hostages beheaded in Chechnya last week trickle out of the breakaway republic, Aslan Maskhadov, the Chechen President, has declared a 30-day state of emergency in a desperate attempt to stem the lawlessness.

Aslambek Arsayev, the Security Minister, said that "the time for talking has passed and it is no longer possible to tolerate the crime wave".

Mr Maskhadov's decision to call up army reservists to help to deal with the problem was yesterday declared unconstitutional by the Chechen parliament.

Three regiments and nine battalions are thought to have been formed in the two days since the decree was announced.

"The criminal groups are very strong and the Government is very weak," Mackharip Cherdayev, a Chechen journalist, said. "It will be very difficult to arrest the foreigners' kidnappers."



Peter Eisenman's memorial design

Berlin divided on its tribute to Jews

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE top cultural adviser to Gerhard Schröder, Michael Naumann, has waded into the bitter German debate over how to commemorate the Holocaust in the centre of Berlin.

Herr Naumann, who rejects an earlier artistic design as being no more than a "wreath dumping ground", wants to build an "interactive" memorial museum with exhibition halls and a "genocide watch" institute.

The first problems arose not with the idea of the monument as such, but with its scale. The current version of the design by Peter Eisenman, an American architect, provides for a labyrinth of 2,700 concrete slabs, resembling a huge cemetery — what the novelist Martin Walser describes as like a "football pitch-sized nightmare".

The Chancellor himself has shown little of the public remorse for the past exhibited by predecessors such as Helmut Kohl. The monument in the political heart of the capital would, he believes, focus attention on the German wartime past rather than the future.

Proponents of the monument say that is precisely the point and that it is correctly positioned — near Hitler's old bunker and former offices of Nazis who planned the Holocaust.

Cypriot bishop is sued for sex claim

BY MICHAEL THEODOULOU

A LEADING Greek-Cypriot bishop is being sued by a monastery on Mount Athos in Greece for claiming that an 80-year-old monk was a "pervert" who had molested nuns during a visit to the island 17 years ago.

The case has riveted Cypriots and brought further embarrassment to the island's powerful Orthodox Church, whose image has been tarnished by a series of lurid sex and financial scandals.

Undeterred by the possibility of a public row with Mount Athos, the Orthodox Church's holiest site, Bishop Chrysostomos of Paphos released what he said was a "semi-erotic" letter written by the monk to a nun called Maria.

The writer refers to her as his "daughter" and makes no explicit sexual references, but he does yearn to spend the night together: "The world tires me, my love, because I cannot stay away from my daughter any longer. Yes, I very very much want to stay the whole night with my little child."

Christos Clerides, a lawyer representing the Vatopedhio monastery in Mount Athos, said the bishop's "interpretation of the letter, if it is genuine, is libellous. He has conveyed the impression that here we are dealing with a pervert."

Supporters of the monk argued that the letter's contents reflected a platonic relationship. "He is over-effusive in his expressions. He is nearly 80, the content is spiritual," said George Iliades.

Bishop Chrysostomos said he knew of many nuns who could testify to the monk's "sexual misdemeanours" and said he had broken his 17-year silence because he wanted the Church to "remain clean and know who it has in its ranks".

However, local news commentators said the bishop was trying to ruin the chances of one of the monk's associates — whom he has also accused of "moral misdemeanours" — of becoming Bishop of Limassol.

The post became vacant last month when its occupant was forced to resign in disgrace over allegations of involvement in huge frauds in several countries, including Britain. A Limassol priest was unfrocked recently after eloping with a Romanian stripper.

France cleared over Rwanda genocide

Paris: A French parliamentary report has cleared France of complicity in the 1994 Rwandan genocide, despite allegations that Paris supplied arms to Hutu forces and then helped the killers to escape justice (Ben Macintyre writes).

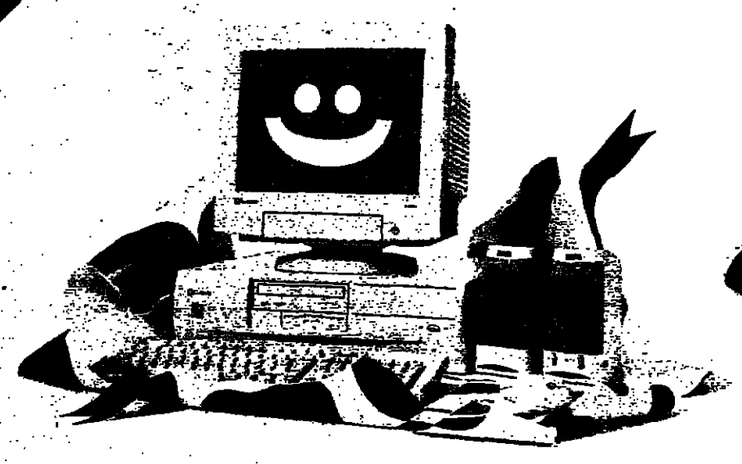
Instead it blames the world community, and especially the United States, for a failure to boost United Nations forces and prevent the mass killings.

The inquiry looked into charges that France supported the Hutu-led Rwandan Government, slowed the advance of Tutsi rebel forces that would have stopped the killing, and helped architects of the genocide to flee. It concluded that France, although "it found itself trapped by its own strategy and manipulated", was "in no way implicated" in the massacres in which at least 800,000 people died.

World passivity and inertia were blamed in part on the hasty departure of Belgian (UN) troops after ten of their number were murdered.

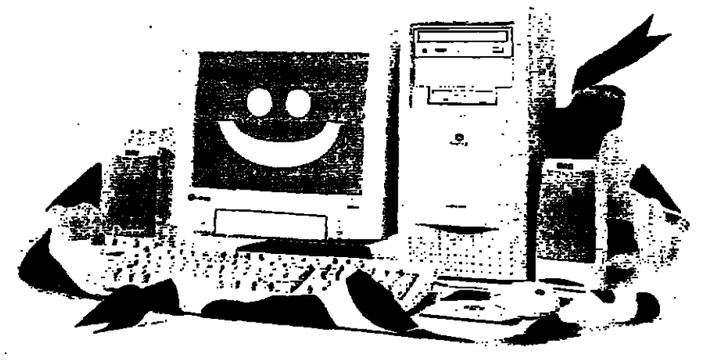
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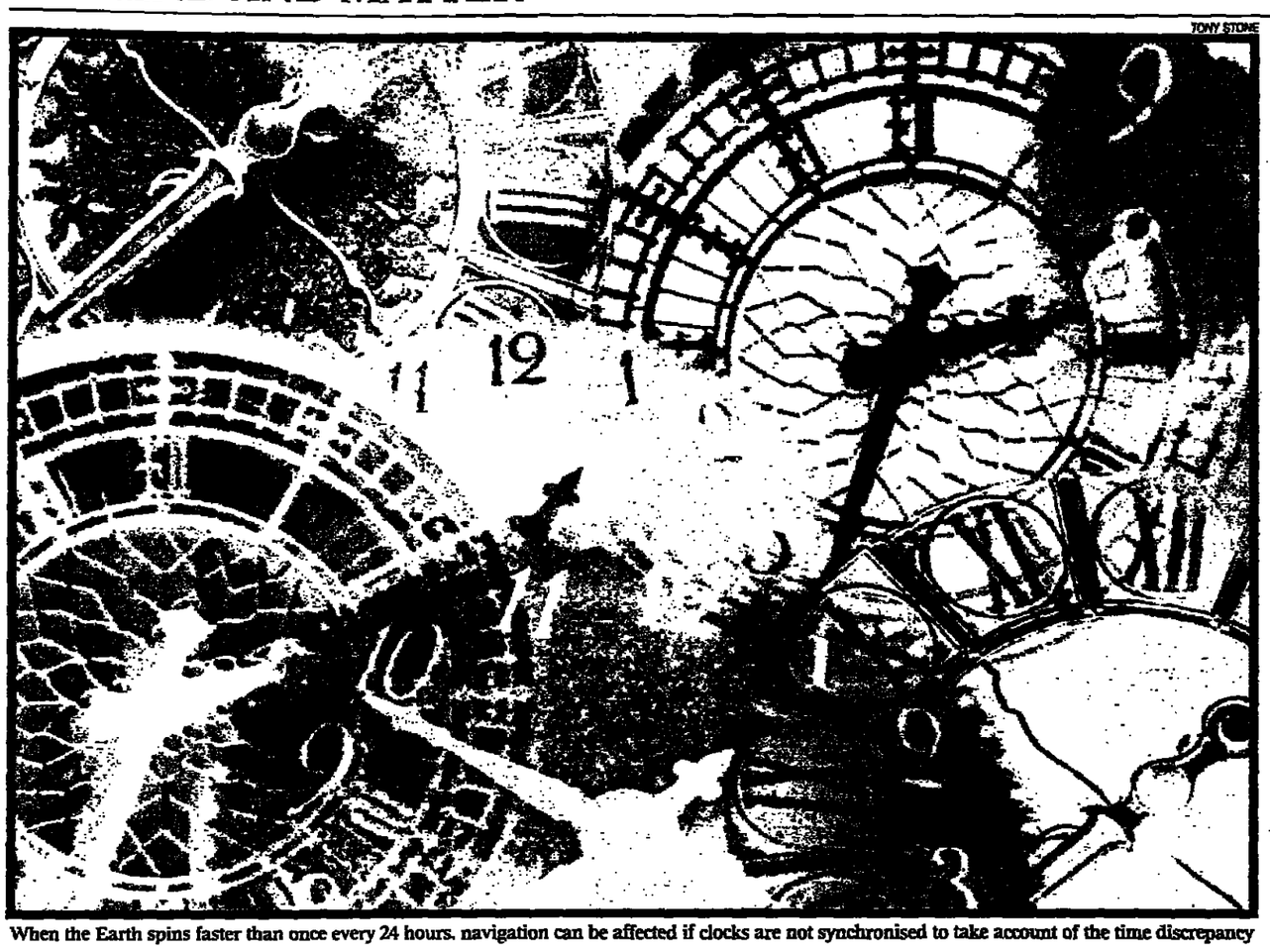
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TONY STONE

When the Earth spins faster than once every 24 hours, navigation can be affected if clocks are not synchronised to take account of the time discrepancy

Stop all the clocks

Winds, tides and wobbles have left Earth a second ahead of itself, says **Anjana Ahuja**

On December 31, at exactly midnight, the clocks that keep time for the world will stop for one second. As midnight descends, digital clocks linked to official time sources will read . . . 58, 59, 60, 0, 1 . . . instead of skipping from 59 straight to 0. Big Ben, the chimes of which sound in the new year, will have its weights adjusted to account for the time delay and the National Physical Laboratory, the nation's timekeeper, will add a seventh pip to the time signals emitted by the Rugby transmitter.

The leap second is being introduced to bring two sets of time into alignment. The world runs on Co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC), which is the average of about 150 atomic clocks stored in laboratories worldwide. This measure of time needs to be kept as close as possible to the natural measure of time determined by the Earth's rotation, known as Universal Time 1 (UT1), so that the 24-hour day ticked off by atomic clocks mirrors the 24-hour day ticked off by the turning of the Earth.

These two times were synchronised in 1900. However, the Earth is spinning slightly more slowly today than it was 90 years ago. In 1900 it took exactly 24 hours to spin once; now it takes 24 hours and approximately two milliseconds.

"We lag behind by two thousandths of a second each day, so over the course of 365 days, a lag of more than 0.7 seconds accumulates," says Dr Dennis McCarthy of the Directorate of Time at the United States Naval Observatory in Washington, which houses nearly half the atomic clocks used to set UTC. Such a time-lapse may not sound significant, but discrepancies between UTC and the Earth's rotation time can lead to navigational problems. Dr McCarthy explains: "If you are navigating using your watch and the stars, a lag of one second means that you would be roughly a quarter of a mile off course."

In the early Seventies, an international agreement stipulated that the difference between the two timescales must not exceed 0.9 seconds. This requires constant monitoring of how fast the Earth is spinning, a task carried out by the International Earth Rotation Service, based at the United States Naval Observatory. When the lag looks as though it will become this great, the IERS authorises the addition of a leap second. The IERS, which has links with the International Astronomical Union and the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics, must inform authorities involved in timekeeping and navigation around the world, including the National Physical Laboratory in London, where the world's first atomic clocks were developed. Global positioning satellite companies and air traffic control headquarters are also notified beforehand.

The first leap second was added in 1972; the latest one will be the 22nd. The agreement allows for leap seconds to be added at the end of either June or December. Second preference is for them to be appended to the end of March or September.

The Earth is spinning more slowly than it was 90 years ago because of the effect of the tides. The phenomenon is known as tidal braking. "The Moon pulling on the tides acts like a giant lever," Dr McCarthy says. "This slows the Earth down. This is the biggest influence on the planet's rotation. Any shifts of mass in the Earth's core can also have an effect. Meteorology is another factor that can work on a timescale of days, months or years — if you take an average of the winds all over the Earth and they have speeded up, then the Earth will slow down.

"If the winds have slowed down, then the Earth will speed up. That is because angular momentum must always be conserved." A negative leap second — to correct for the Earth spinning faster than once every 24 hours — has never been introduced. Dr McCarthy points out that the Earth has been braking for millennia: "By examining records of ancient observations of solar eclipses, we know that this slowdown has been going on for a long time."

Because short-term effects are included in the calculations, leap second corrections are rarely announced more than six months in advance. For that reason, it is unclear whether there will be another one before the arrival of the millennium.

Keeping time is an extraordinarily complex business. Dr McCarthy's department at the observatory operates about 70 caesium clocks in 18 temperature and humidity-controlled vaults. The observatory also uses ten hydrogen maser clocks. Masers are similar to lasers, but emit microwaves instead of light. The frequency of these emissions is extremely stable over periods of a few months, so maser clocks can be used as an extra benchmark.

Each clock is compared against a master clock, which is continuously adjusted so that it is ticking at the average of all the other clocks. The timepieces are monitored by two independent systems, one making readings every 100 seconds and one making readings every hour. The caesium clocks — caesium is chosen for its exceptional atomic stability — are accurate to two billionths of a second a day, or one second in 1,400,000 years. And, as Dr McCarthy knows, people around the world expect nothing less. "We are anticipating, as usual, a flood of calls on December 31 to our speaking clock," he says. "So we have to get it right."

THE TIMES
The Times and the Royal Institution announce
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Are you a talented scientist with a passion for sharing your research with a wider audience?
The Times has joined forces with The Royal Institution to launch the Scientists for the New Century Lectures, a series of nine public talks throughout 1999. These lectures will introduce some of the country's best young scientists, revealing the importance of their work and raising the profile of British science.
Applications are invited from scientists, technologists and engineers who would like to share their work through these high-profile events. Nine scientists will be chosen to speak on the basis of academic excellence and ability to communicate. The selection panel will be chaired by the Director of the Royal Institution, Professor Susan Greenfield. At the end of the series, one speaker will be awarded a prestigious Times-RI medal for their contribution to the communication of science.
Applicants, who should be under 40 years of age, should send a CV, a 600-word outline of the lecture, and the names of two referees to the Director, The Royal Institution of Great Britain, 21 Albemarle Street, London, W1X 4BS. For further details, see www.rigb.org/rimain.html or call 0171 409 2992. The closing date for applications is 6 January, 1999.
THE ROYAL INSTITUTION OF GREAT BRITAIN 1799 - 1999

Dissolving infections; a purple gem; Earth's core

The smart assassins



SCIENCE BRIEFING

Nigel Hawkes

A NEW approach to beating off infections has come from studying how insects and frogs do it. Their first line of defence consists of small protein fragments, or peptides, no more than about 12 amino acids long, which use a simple method of attack. They attach themselves to the surface membrane of a bacterium and dissolve it, rather as a detergent dissolves the grease on a plate.

The result is to cause the bacterium to spill its contents and die. Scientists at the Weizmann Institute in Rehovoth, Israel, reported recently that more than 100 of these handy peptides have been discovered. The first were found in invertebrates, but the technique seems to be universal: human beings also carry them. The Israeli team, led by Professor Yechiel Shai, believes that the synthetic versions it has developed could provide a completely new type of antibiotic, and has set up a company to exploit them.

New antibiotics are certainly needed. In spite of this week's action by European Union agriculture ministers to ban the use of four antibiotics as animal growth promoters, indiscriminate medical use of the miracle drugs seems likely to seal their fate, sooner or later, by allowing resistant bugs to develop. Fortunately, the 1990s have seen a renaissance of interest by researchers and drug companies striving to fill the gap that will be left when existing antibiotics cease to be effective.

Two are pretty close. Pharmacia and Upjohn's Linezolid is in final trials, while Rhone-Poulenc Rorer has submitted an application for approval of its new drug, Synercid. Both of these have shown impressive results in trials. Looking farther ahead, researchers are also using the new techniques of genomics to try to identify genes that are essential to the survival of bacteria, and to find weapons to disable them. There is growing confidence that this sophisticated technique will locate many antibacterial compounds that could never be found by the older trial-and-error methods.

The Israeli approach is simpler. Instead of looking for clever chemicals that must find a way of penetrating bacterial cells and interfering with their internal workings, they hope that their synthetic peptides will latch on and blow them apart. They have found that the attachment process depends not on precise chemical structure, as was previously believed, but on composition — so the peptides do not have to be purpose-built to be effective. This means that it should be relatively easy to produce large quantities of such peptides, and to design families of them geared to kill different bacteria. A mixture could be used to increase effectiveness.

The team has found that the peptides are particularly effective against Gram-positive bacteria such as *Staphylococci*, *enterococci* and *pneumococci*, which is convenient as this type of bacterium is showing the greatest resistance to existing antibiotics. Professor Shai also believes that because the killing process is so swift and complete, it would be difficult for bacteria to develop resistance; and that side-effects should be limited because the peptides only latch on to negatively charged bacterial membranes, not the neutral membranes of ordinary body cells. But so far the evidence comes only from test tubes. Animal tests come next and, if those work, lengthy human trials will be needed.

A jewel by any other name



A NEW precious stone has made its debut in South Africa. Rich purple in colour, it looks striking in a gold ring. But as Professor Robert Cahn of the Department of Material Science and Metallurgy at Cambridge explains in *Nature*, it is not a stone but an intermetallic compound — a kind of alloy — of gold and aluminium. What is more, it is already notorious among electronic engineers as the "purple plague".

When melted together, gold and aluminium form the compound AuAl$_2$. Its existence has been known since 1892, but until now no use has been found for it. In early microcircuits, where gold wires were connected to aluminium terminals, or vice versa, the compound tended to form and, because it is brittle, break. Hence its name.

South African jewellers use "stones" made by Mintek, a mineral and metallurgical company based in Randburg. So far, Professor Cahn says, the stones lack a name. He suggests Purple Glory.

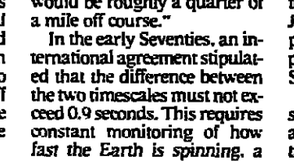
Solid facts about quake waves



SCIENTISTS have finally found evidence that we do stand on solid ground, even if it lies a long way down. Geologists have for ages believed that the very centre of Earth, which lies inside a core of molten iron, is solid because of the immense pressures. Now seismic waves generated by an earthquake in Indonesia in June 1996 have proved the case.

In *Earth and Planetary Science Letters*, Professor Emil Okal of Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, says that after the quake, he and a French colleague, Dr Yves Cansi, detected the kind of waves that can be propagated only by solids. "[They] can transmit waves that oscillate in the direction of travel, and can transmit a wave that vibrates perpendicular to the direction of travel, like a guitar string," he says. Detecting such waves required a big quake deep in Earth's crust, very sensitive instruments and a computerised method for separating signal from noise, which was developed by the French.

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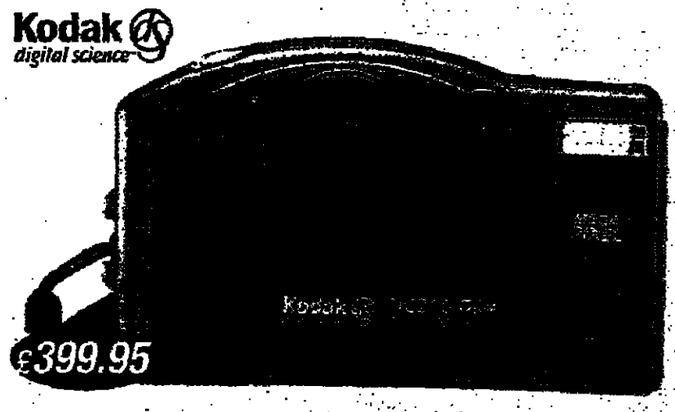
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Popcorn and epidurals all round

Friday, 7.30pm: "Hello, I'm Penny and welcome to Friday night at the movies," says our instructor, fiddling with the controls of a Sony Jumbotron. We are sitting in the conference room on the second floor of St Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital, about to spend the evening watching a series of birthing films which comprise the foundation course for our compulsory childbirth studies. There are 12 couples altogether, and most have come prepared with a picnic.

Penny struggles for our attention as we all unpack turkey club sandwiches, pizza slices, trail mix and popcorn, and noisily pop the ring-pulls on Diet Cokes.

"Now I'd like to go around the group and have you all introduce yourselves, give your due date and tell everyone the name of your childbirth instructor."

"Hi everyone, I'm Sabrina," says a smart brunette opposite us, grinning confidently. "And this is Gary. We're due February 11 and our instructor is called Sigrid."

"Hi, I'm Brad and this is Charlotte. We couldn't score theatre tickets for *The Blue Room* but we heard this show's pretty hot." Charlotte laughs supportively.

"Hi, I'm David," says a solitary suit, crossly. "My wife is called Olga. And she's late."

Penny, whom I recognise from our maternity tour of the hospital last month, when she introduced herself as "a trained nurse and now working in corporate America", beams at us. Inserting the first video with a snap, she turns the lights down, we sit back and the Jumbotron fizzes into life. Olga, the missing wife, slips in sheepishly. "This one's called *The Miracle of Birth*," says Penny.

The Miracle of Birth, by "InJoy Films", turns out to be a series of five birthing stories. The first story is told by Kerry and Felix, a thirtysomething couple from Georgia. "By 4am I was throwing up," says Kerry bleakly. "I got to the hospital and said 'I'd like some drugs' but they said 'It's too late'." This is followed by



scenes of her splayed in a hospital bed, grunting furiously. A murmur of panic sweeps through our group.

The next couple are called Andrea and Jorge, who turn up on the labour ward with Andrea's mother, niece and best friend Jennifer in tow. Jennifer's task is to administer massages every time Andrea emits terrible noises, which is often. "When I had the epidural, I expected it to work straightaway," says Andrea. "But it didn't." Another wave of panic.

New York career women, especially those who have delayed having their first baby until their late thirties or forties, are unusually prescriptive about how they want their babies to be born. One doctor explained it to me recently, at a conference called Having a Baby in America: "They're used to being in control, so they expect to be able to control their birthing experience." The point of tonight's films is clearly to show that often this isn't possible. None of the births we witness on the Jumbotron goes as planned.

Joyce and Bruce are next. "I felt pretty prepared. We'd been to the classes, I'd seen the videos," says Joyce, as the female heads around the conference room nod approvingly. "I thought if I could use my strong will, I'd be all right." More approving nods.

"But I couldn't," Joyce bursts out, sounding ashamed. "Women had told me that labour feels like having a bowling ball inside you, but I didn't feel like that. I was close to panic." We flash to a close-up of her moaning "Help me, help me!" and a doctor explaining that the labour had "failed to progress". "It's time for a Caesarean section," he tells her, taking several tortuous minutes to explain the operation before presenting her with a small-print contract on a clipboard and asking for her consent.

> 'Your foetus has rights, you know'

"I need ... to be relieved ... as soon as possible ..." she gasps, snatching the pen and desperately scrawling her name.

The camera zooms in as the scalpel slices through skin and layers of fat and muscle, and the surgeon's bloody glove scoops aside the pile of intestines and tugs out the surprised foetus like a magician yanking a rabbit from a hat. Several women cover their eyes and sigh queasily.

"So," chirps Penny, as the credits run and the room stays silent. Even the chomping has stopped. "Any surprises?"

No one says anything.

"Any questions?" Penny persists bravely. "Well, the husbands did a good job," offers Charlotte's husband, Brad. "A very good job," echoes the husband in front of us.

9:15pm: "And now," announces Penny, like a compere trying to keep her audience, "I have a special treat for you, you are going to see a premiere about epidurals. Any questions?"

"What's the driving issue for a natural childbirth?" asks the ever-eager Brad. "I mean, what's the catalyst for not wanting an epidural?"

"You want to be working well with your body," Penny replies. "After an epidural, you're numb from the waist down and can't feel what's happening down there."

I am amazed to see Peter swallowing his mouthful of trail mix and raising his hand. "What's your epidural rate here?" he inquires. "Um, if I said 50 per cent, I might be erring on the low side," she says. There is a buzz of astonishment and she adds, defensively: "I know of one New York hospital where the epidural rate is so high, their goal is to lower it to 95 per cent."

10pm: Repair to Barolo, an Italian restaurant in SoHo, and to recover I weaken and order a solitary flute of champagne. As I sip it luxuriously, a woman approaches our table. "Excuse me, but I wonder if you realise that alcohol can damage your foetus," she says sternly. "Oh, I'm sure one glass won't do it any harm." I reply cheerily. Her face clouds. "Your foetus has rights, you know," she admonishes, and stalks away.

No one can tell us to toe the line

Many hereditary peers believe they have no right to be in the House but argue that, despite this, they are doing a good job. **James Hughes-Onslow** reports


SUZANNE HUBBARD

Lady Mar says the Lords needs reforming and hereditary peers should prove their worth

The House of Lords is similar to an omelette, and as such should be — if I understand Delia Smith correctly — very sparingly whipped, so that it retains its uneven quality. Frenzied beating may make your eggs more consistent in texture, but also less palatable and less interesting.

Tony Blair's objection to hereditary peers is said to be that they are predominantly Tory supporters, but the real problem they represent for anyone who wants to be in control is that their lordships come in all shapes and sizes. Could there be a fundamental historical antipathy between the Lords and the Commons? Perhaps underneath the rhetoric, William Hague is as eager to be rid of the hereditary peers as the Prime Minister. After all, the Tories have always been fond of ennobling the party faithful, and the hereditary peerage which was designed to undermine royal patronage, does limit a man's power to dish out prizes.

This is a view put forward by the 5th Earl Russell, a Liberal Democrat who is also a Professor of British History at King's College London. Peers with a sense of history quite enjoy the complexities of real life, unlike party managers in the Commons who prefer to present everything in more simplified terms.

Lord Russell was recently threatened with dismissal from the Lib Dem front-bench when he voted against a three-line whip supporting the closed list in the European Elections Bill. This is a sackable offence in anyone's language but hereditary peers are answerable to no one. "They refrained from sacking me," says Lord Russell, who was clearly too valuable to lose, modestly avoiding claims of triumph that might upset his colleagues.

Earlier this year, Lord Russell had an undeniable success over party whips when he took an independent line on the Irish terrorism Bill. Three weeks later the party conference backed his proposals, defying party managers, but in the House of Lords you don't crow about such victories, you just put it down to divine intervention.

Conrad Russell is the second son of the philosopher Bertrand Russell and the great-grandson of the Whig Prime Minister John Russell. He recalls his father telling him in the late 1960s that he had stopped supporting the Liberals in 1914 because he could not be a member of the same party as Lord Grey, the Foreign Secretary who took Britain into the First World War.

Conrad Russell has been a Labour supporter from time to time, but since 1974 has backed the Liberals, strictly on the ground that his party supports his ideas, rather than the other way around. It is just a question of joining the right party, he says. One rather suspects that if Paddy Ashdown tried to tell Lord Russell what he should think, there would be a very nasty scene, similar to the showdown between William Hague and Viscount Cranborne.

The great strength of the hereditaries as defenders of democracy is that party managers cannot tell them that they owe their seats to the party, and that the time has come to toe the line. Threats of deselection, which have become a part of everyday life in the House of Commons, have tended to accentuate this difference in approach between the two Houses. In the modern era, MPs are more inclined than ever to look over their shoulders for instruction from their bosses.

Recently Lord Russell has supported Lord Cranborne's independent stand, saying he displayed a loyalty to the House of Lords and had served William Hague in the same spirit in which his ancestor William Cecil, Lord Burghley, served Elizabeth I. In 1587 Lord Burghley took an independent decision to send off the warrant for the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, and not to tell the Queen until after the execution. Elizabeth was furious with Lord Burghley and for three months refused to see him or open his letters. But she did not sack him and later came to realise that he had provided her with an alibi for a dangerous decision and had saved her from going to war with France and Scotland. Lord Burghley was restored to favour because Elizabeth was big enough to take it. "It was an act of bigness of which Hague has proved incapable," says Lord Russell.

It would be wrong to say he supports everything his hereditary colleagues do but he does believe that they are doing a good job. On the whole, he still thinks he is an anachronism and ought to be abolished, with the Lords being replaced by an elected chamber.

He says: "Our problem is that we can't explain why it should be us who is doing such a good job. It would be much easier to defend our role if we were selected by a more rational method. The Lords would have much more clout to stop the Government if they had more public support." Giving the Lords more clout to stop the Government may be the last thing Tony Blair has in mind, but it is worth remembering that this is what the House of peers was set up to do. The fact that it was hereditary made it more effective as a foil to the monarch because it was less susceptible to patronage from the Throne.

Another advantage of hereditary peers is that they are sometimes very young and often very old, and represent generations that are often neglected by the Commons. Youth and age are almost impossible to discipline, Lord Russell notes. The young are headstrong and possibly naive, while the old are experienced and can't be made to modify their views for future reward. When a young member or an old one gets up to speak there is nothing to be gained from shouting them down. You can't bully them, you must hear them out.

Even if there are hereditary members, Lord Russell believes that he has no right to be there. He thinks that his niece Sarah, the daughter of his elder brother, should really be in his place on the red leather benches. "One of the duties of the hereditary peers was to fight for his country," says Lord Russell. "Now that they are no longer required to do this, there is no argument for excluding women from the peerage."

As it happens, there is one hereditary peeress who has made a formidable name for herself as an independent thinker. The Countess of Mar worked for BT before she inherited her title — said to be Scotland's oldest earldom dating from the 12th century — from her father, who was better known as a speaker in the bar than in the chamber in the Lords.

But it was her experience as a farmer in Worcestershire, when sheep dip leaked into her gumboots, that led her to become a painful thorn in the ample flesh of Nicholas Soames when he was Defence Procurement Minister in the previous Government. The depression she suffered from the effects of organophosphates, almost driving her to suicide on several occasions, made her a terrier-like campaigner for the victims of Gulf War syndrome, who she alleged had been contaminated by chemical and biological weapons. No MP, fed with statistics from the chemical industry and with very little personal contact with sheep dips, listening sympathetically to the moans of constituents on the one hand and party whips on the other, would have been half so effective in bringing this scandal to light.

"In order not to repeat myself I'm going to say it for the last time," Soames once remarked after a hammering from Lady Mar. "We have no evidence of any chemical or biological warfare at all in the Gulf."

Events were to show that Soames was ill-advised in saying this, but the real glory of Lady Mar is that even with the arrival of a Labour Government, which has caused so many of the more colourful rebels in the Commons to pack their bags, she shows no sign of ceasing her bombardment on those responsible for the use of chemical weapons. Only last week she was on her feet, attacking the Ministry of Defence, causing one noble wag to observe: "New Labour, same Lady Mar."


GILL ALLEN

Lord Russell: "Our problem is that we can't explain why it should be us doing such a good job"

Lady Mar says: "I have been involved with this issue for six years now and I'm inching my way very slowly forward." She is currently enraged by a report from the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Psychiatrists suggesting that Gulf War syndrome is all in the mind. "They say sufferers who have tried one treatment without success should try another one, such as cognitive behaviour therapy. They haven't addressed the underlying problem. I am furious. I regard it as a travesty."

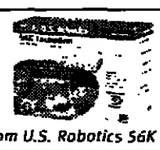
Lady Mar's view on Lord Cranborne is that this business could have been handled better by all sides and hasn't done anyone any good. She has thought for a long time that the House needs reforming and that the 1968 proposals, in which hereditary peers were given an opportunity to prove their worth, were rather good.

Mercifully, it seems that Lady Mar, as one of the deputy speakers occasionally taking the place of Lord Irvine of Lairg, will be offered a place under the current plans. As a frontbencher, Lord Russell should earn a place, too, if he doesn't defy his whips too publicly. But what of all the other magnificent troublemakers? One thinks of Lord Avebury, who discovered the arms to Sierra Leone scandal on the Net. As the former Eric Lubbock and a former Liberal Chief Whip in the Commons, Lord Avebury has probably earned the respect of his peers but, who knows, he may have annoyed someone by campaigning for Third World civil rights.

As the day approaches when the parties have to nominate which of the hereditary peers are to survive the culling process will we see the hereditaries behaving like toadies in an effort to save their skins, just as their cousins in the Commons do? Will we see fewer peers such as Russell, Mar and Avebury speaking their minds on subjects they know about and care about? If so, this could be a defining moment in the plan to reform the Lords, and one that we should all regret.

Meanwhile, we should treasure those hereditary peers who still have minds of their own and give these ill-trained, but well-bred, spaniels every encouragement before it is too late.

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Gore the bore's bleak week

The Veep is an odd man out of luck, says **Bronwen Maddox**

President Clinton says resignation has not crossed his mind. That can't be true, but for the moment, we might as well take it at face value. Depression and discouragement may eventually puncture his resilience, but he is not known as a quitter. Yet the chance that Mr Clinton might step down in the wake of an impeachment vote has crossed everyone else's mind. It has concentrated thought, at least for the moment, on the prospect of President Gore. And what a very odd man he is.

The past week could have been a turning point, in which Mr Gore emerged from the shadow of the two men who have dominated his political life. First, there was the death of his father, Albert Gore Sr, a giant of Tennessee politics. Then Mr Clinton, under an unexpected and potentially calamitous threat to his presidency, removed himself to Gaza where, when not exhorting peace, he sunk into a moody silence. Understandably, Mr Gore might feel overtaken by personal grief. Yet in this week of rising drama, irresistible to most of the political class, he has been afflicted more than ever by his legendary woodenness. His remarks this week exemplify his oddness.

In defence of his boss, he said: "The American people by overwhelming majorities have decided that — notwithstanding that what the President did was wrong — he should not be impeached and removed from office as a result of that and what they favour instead is censure to give the President the punishment and rebuke that they feel is appropriate in this."

How can a clever man be so nervous with words? Or a politician so poor at delivery? In Gore-speak, a single word is designated the summit of the message; the supporting clauses then jumble around its shoulders, petering out in foothills of dangling prepositions before the climb to the next peak.

Above all, how can a classically handsome man look so unappealing? He is tall, square-shouldered, with regular features and a thick cap of dark hair for which most members of Congress would die. *The Wall Street Journal*, which sketches rather than photographs the protagonists of the day, has endless trouble with Bill Clinton's face: fleshy, but not obese; strong, but lacking checkbones. But its artists do a perfect Al Gore.

The problem comes in trying to animate the Gore cartoon. When you watch the Vice-President, it looks as though the film is running too slowly and you feel you can still glimpse the individual frames. Mr Gore is a self-aware man, and for two years, he has decided to make self-deprecating jokes about his woodenness. But they've stopped playing well; it's no laughing matter. The worst was his notion, in October, of dressing up himself and his wife, Tipper, as mummies, wrapped in white bandages head to foot, to greet guests at their Hallowe'en party. Surely some branch of 20th-century learning, whether psychology or public relations, should have saved him. The puzzle is why he cannot do better.

There are many, many stories about Mr Gore's sunny side, the lighthearted banter with aides, the easy warmth with his family, the playfulness with wayward toddlers stumbling into his office.

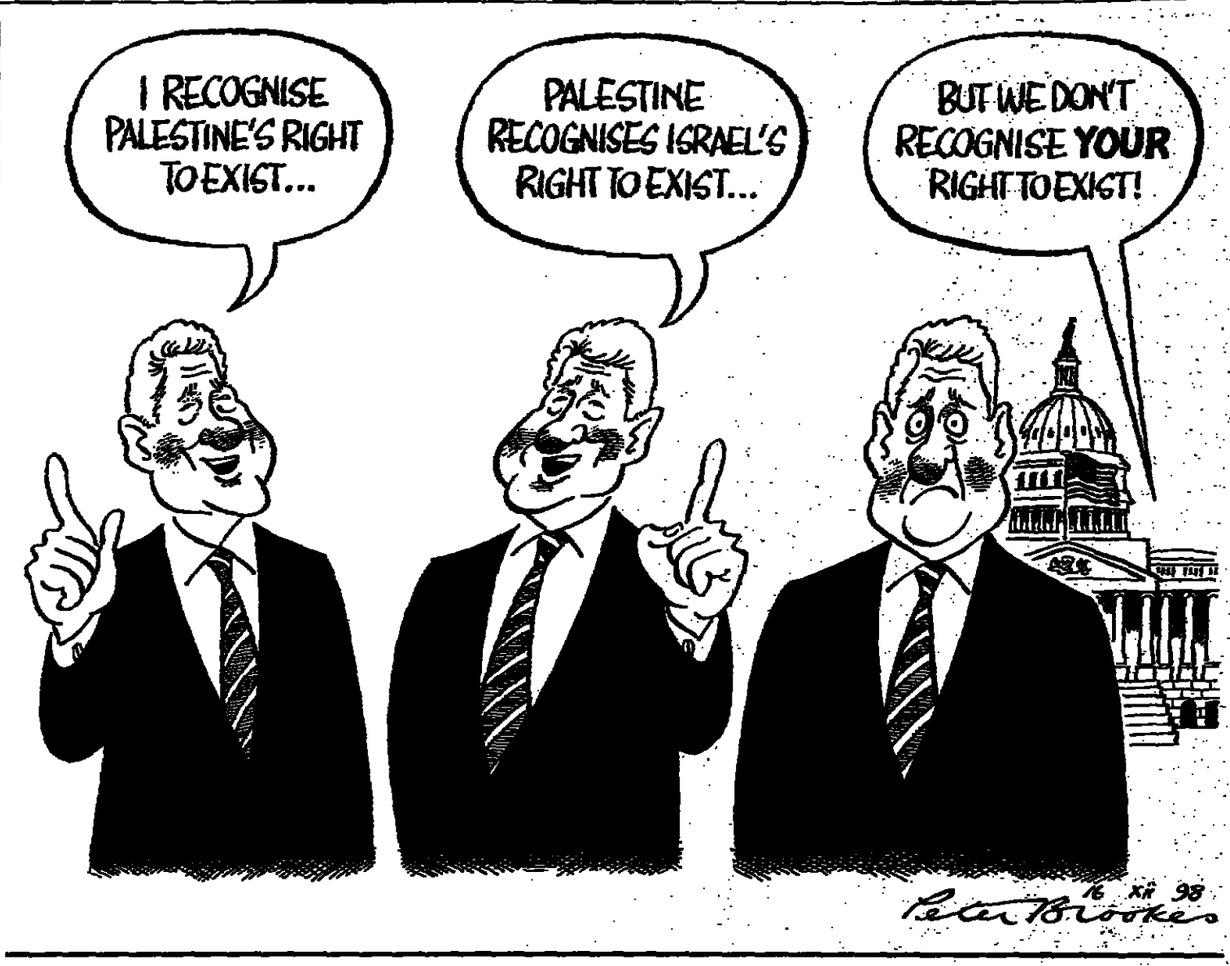
But accounts from his schooldays show that his excessive gravity was fully in place by the time he was 10. A longed-for but unexpected second child, he was born ten years after his ebullient sister, and christened Albert, as his parents' only son. When he was picked as Mr Clinton's running-mate, his father boasted to *The New York Times* that "we raised him for it". In fact, Al Gore seems to have attracted the burden of family expectations only when his father's 18-year run in the Senate ended. Unsurprisingly, family life was dominated by Albert Sr, one of the most charismatic politicians of his generation. A rare liberal among Southern Democrats, he passionately supported the civil rights movement and spoke out early against the Vietnam War.

> Al Gore thinks too far ahead — he can't cope with the present

Al Gore's response to that formidable ancestry has been to try hard to get things right. He has indulged his taste for abstraction, for science, for impersonal topics such as global warming; he believes, with a barely camouflaged priggishness, that politicians should stick to issues not rhetoric. He tries too hard. On a recent trip to Chernobyl — a gift as a backdrop for any politician — he stayed up all night crafting his speech on his laptop. The result, of which he was apparently very proud, was an analysis of the Chernobyl explosion as a failure to think far enough ahead, and a comparison with the forecast millennial computer meltdown, also diagnosed as a failure to think ahead.

Mr Gore's problem is that he always thinks ahead — too far. It is the unexpectedness of the present that leaves him so at sea. Mr Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky stemmed from a recklessness which, patently, leaves Mr Gore stunned and voiceless. In contrast, Richard Gephardt, a potential rival for the presidential nomination, is animated and vigorous, passionately engaged in the arguments. Mr Gephardt looks like the real politician for whom Mr Gore is the auditioning actor. It is quite possible that circumstances will make Mr Gore President, either by the still barely conceivable resignation of Mr Clinton, or by election in 2000. But even then, it is hard to imagine that the bandages will come off, and that the mummy will come to life.

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Gordon's errand boys

The Deputy Prime Minister and the new mayor of London are to be little more than Treasury tax-collectors

Simon Jenkins

When is a control freak not a control freak? Answer, when he is only obeying orders.

John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister of Great Britain, has emerged as one of the more sympathetic personalities of the Blair Government. He is a bit of a card, a man of the people, a George Brown or Ernie Bevin, giving political street cred to an otherwise effete team. There is dirt under Mr Prescott's fingernails. He would survive a revolution. Nobody controls him.

So what was Mr Prescott doing on Monday evening, rising in the House of Commons to recommend sub-paragraph 5 of Schedule 13 of the Greater London Authority Bill? The Bill honours Labour's pledge to set up a mayor and assembly for London and is said to be the biggest ever presented to Parliament. The crucial passages concern money, notably those referring to Tony Blair's pledge in his last conference speech to give the mayor freedom to raise and spend new traffic taxes. Herein lay the key to movement in cities. Mr Prescott claimed in public that he had fought the Treasury and won. Local councils could levy new charges on office parking and city-centre driving and devote the revenue to public transport. Such taxes are known as hypothecated. Mr Prescott boasted hypothecation on the *Today* programme. He boasted it in Parliament. Read me lips, he said. Wherever I walk little children will cry: "There goes Mr Hypothecation, bless him."

I prefer to read Mr Prescott's law. What that clearly says, in Schedule 13 to Sections 200 and 201, is that a mayor can propose what he likes, but the Secretary of State will decide. The mayor cannot even keep the money. Astonishingly, the Government can make the mayor "pay a prescribed portion of the net proceeds of (the new taxes) to the Secretary of State". Having undermined hypothecation once, Mr Prescott does it again. Even he cannot keep the money and spend it on transport. Sub-paragraph 5 is categorical: "Any sums received by the Secretary of State under the regulations or a charging scheme shall be paid into the Consolidated Fund." In other words the money goes to the Treasury. Congestion charges are not a local tax at all, but a new national one.

When I last wrote about Mr Prescott's "victory", I gave a warning that few ministers claim to have worsted the Treasury and survive. The Treasury hates hypothecated taxes. They are outside its control. It hates Mr Prescott's department and the whole of local government for much the same reason. These deplorable relics of democratic pluralism were all but stamped out by Lord Lawson of Blaby and Kenneth Clarke. Like the Cathar heresy they keep reappearing and needing a new Inquisition. But even I could not have predicted the savagery of the Treasury's revenge. Sub-paragraph 5, written by the Treasury, is a red hot poker rammed up Mr Prescott's posterior. Let it be a lesson to all uppity Deputy Prime Ministers.

Anyone who doubts the Treasury's earnest should turn to a second text. This is buried in Mr Prescott's *Breaking the Logjam*, a document on transport reform outside London also published last week. Chapter three on congestion taxes states that Mr Prescott will "take powers to require a proportion of the revenue to be paid to central government". And lest a mayor or council thinks it can answer to its electorate for spending the rest, a further statute will grant "powers to the Secretary of State to make regulations governing the use of the remainder". So much for local discretion.

This centralist fanaticism is totally against the letter and spirit of Labour's manifesto pledge. The finance sections of the London Bill do not even relate to their preceding Green or White Papers. A desperate Mr Prescott promised on Monday that he would not seize congestion tax revenues "for ten years", a pledge that he cannot expect to honour. Why pass a Bill that he is forced to promise not to implement? A similar pledge was made by both party leaders over "hypothecated" National Lottery revenue. Barely five years passed and that money was treated as central government revenue. Like the road fund licence and national insurance, new taxes are always smoothed into place under the pretence of some worthy cause. They then briskly vanish into the voracious jaw of the Exchequer.

On Monday Mr Prescott's junior, Glenda Jackson, flatly denied any argument with the Treasury over the Bill. She must have been off sick this past half year. I have more respect for her department than to believe it never put up a fight. Mr Prescott and his London minister, Nick Raynsford, battled with Gordon Brown to honour their manifesto and their White Paper commitments. He refused, presumably with Downing Street connivance. Labour's policy is now clear: reformed local government in Britain, alone in Europe, is to have no control over its resources. It is to be a statutory agency of central government.

The Treasury is a law unto itself. Its acolytes are not accountable for their eccentric vision of the public sector, nor do their ministers answer in public for the policies they inflict on other departments. Other ministers have to do that, half-heartedly defending what they often know to be indefensible. An open secret in Whitehall is that London's chaotic Tube privatisation is the brainchild of the same Treasury official, Steve Robson, who crafted the British Rail sell-off. His scheme is being defended not by a Treasury minister but by poor Mr Prescott, who loathes it and is sensible enough to know it will not work. The Treasury view may be tested behind closed doors in Whitehall, but never properly in public.

This view has nobbled the London mayor. Traffic taxes were the one new revenue stream promised him. The rest of the mayoral budget is controlled from Whitehall. The Secretary of State is mentioned more than 250 times in the Bill's 277 clauses, mostly as being given powers to control the mayor. Sections 70 and 71 of the Bill empower him to control London's finances. Mr Prescott can "alter the constituents of any (budget) calculation ... whether by adding, deleting or amending items". He can put a floor and ceiling on police or transport spending and determine any switch in priorities. He is not obliged to take any notice of Londoners' votes. As for the new London assembly, it has all the powers of an old Russian soviet.

A sceptic might conclude that Mr Blair and Mr Brown are seeking to do a Thatcher. They have gazed into the future, seen Red Ken, and decided to abolish the new government of London before even setting it up. I wonder where the swaggering communitarians who used to staff Mr Blair's policy unit are now. They have scuttled back to their think-tanks at the first whiff of Treasury shot. Mr Brown, a Scot, can even boast that he will have the power to seize the taxes of fat London motorists and use them to subsidise his friends in Scotland. This is bravura politics.

In the circumstances, a mayor or local council would be mad to introduce the new charges. Mayors are to be Treasury tax-gatherers. Why on earth should they be accountable for tax raising but not tax spending? This is a facsimile of the poll tax debacle. The Treasury undermined that tax's local accountability by capping it and treating it as a national tax. Mr Brown is doing what Lord Lawson did. Obsessed with central control, he is wrecking a reform meant to transform urban transport by giving local leaders an incentive to make a real difference to their cities. This reform cannot proceed unless Clauses 200 and 201 of the Bill are removed.

British cities must have elected mayors. This Government has offered them. Any extension of local democracy is better than none. But London is not to have a proper mayor, only a cheerleader. Mr Prescott is legislating to remain as central arbiter of government in the capital. But Londoners do not vote in Hull. Neither Mr Prescott nor Mr Brown will be answerable in any respect to the new London assembly or its electors. London government remains crucially unaccountable. That is what happens when you take orders from the Treasury.

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Alan Coren



Tested to the lamb knuckle in the mid-night hours

Let me start, this morning (since it is actually yesterday morning when I am starting this) with a highly topical quotation from perhaps the best of all the great songs in *Guys and Dolls*: "Adelaide, Adelaide, is taking a chance — talk about your long shots . . ."

Relevant, or what? Though only, I fear, for those on my wavelength, because that wavelength is 198 LW, which, until a few minutes ago, was beaming me the crucial third Test match from, yes, Adelaide; where, until those same few minutes ago, the plucky little band of English commentators was talking about long shots. It was talking about the longest shot of all. It was breaking through the breathless hush in my bed tonight to beguile my right ear into believing that this might just be the one occasion when the English tail wagged; when Crawley, or Hick, or Gough, or Mullally, or Such, as soon as their captain's hand on their shoulder smote, might for once play up and play the game, ie, stay at one end while Capt Stewart cobbled a quick 300 at the other to ensure that the Ashes battle remained open. Talk about your long shots. Or, rather, talk about your wild shots. Adelaide, Adelaide, is taking five chances. Five wickets in 16 balls, and 23 minutes after lunch, all was over.

So, then, what did I do? Did I shriek in rage and anguish, did I bang head against headboard, did I set fire to the MCC card in my bedside drawer, did I wake Mrs Coren to tell her that I was just going outside, and might be some time? I did none of these. I merely took my face from the pillow and the earpiece from my ear, and went downstairs to mix myself a large Alka-Seltzer. I do that after lunch, when lunch is taken at 2.30am and consists of cold lamb gnawed off the bone, a chunk of cheddar so mature it could probably have set itself up as a marriage counsellor if any teeth had got to it first, and a plate of something dark and spotty from the back of the fridge, could be bread pudding, could be surplus duck-stuffing, hard to tell, and a large Scotch.

And as the Alka-Seltzer fizzed, I raised it to absent batting. For if it had not been so absent, I myself might have not survived five Tests. Over the past month, I have lain partially awake for a dozen nights, and stumbled about partially asleep for a dozen subsequent days. The hell is in the partially. Bad stuff has happened because of the partially. Alert at half-past midnight for the first ball, by half-past one I am dozy. Dozy is bad. Dozy is leaving a cigarette burning in the bedside ashtray until Mrs Coren, a light sleeper during infernos, smells smoke and wakes up and shouts me out of dozy. Dozy is reaching for a bedside glass with a semi-comatose arm, and trying to drink from it while horizontal, because Mrs Coren is also a light sleeper during floods. But if dozy is bad, zonked is worse. Zonked comes with the after-lunch session, could be the Scotch, and snoring comes with zonked, around 3.30am, which means your arm gets punched, since Mrs Coren is a light sleeper during thunderstorms. Sometimes, mind, the dezonking has nothing to do with her, it is to do with falling asleep on your right side and having the earpiece work itself so firmly inside your ear that, when the discomfort wakes you, the act of sitting upright drags the radio off its shelf. On at least two occasions this was not merely noisy, it made the set change stations, compelling me to turn the light on to find 198LW again, and Mrs Coren is a light sleeper during pre-emptory dawns. It was, I think, on the second day of the Sydney Test that she got up at 5.45 and started to dress. I caringly explained that she did not need to be at work for a good three hours yet, and ran downstairs. I do not normally go down for the tea-interval, but thought it best. Once there, though, I made a jam sandwich and a cup of cocoa, which irritatingly meant missing the first over after tea due to sponging jam off my pyjamas, because Mrs Coren is a light sleeper, and care should be taken not to have her suddenly stuck to the person beside her.

But all that is now over, which is why I am up here in the loft at 6.30, typing this. It wasn't worth going back to bed. It'll soon be time for breakfast. Or rather, since I've already had lunch, dinner.

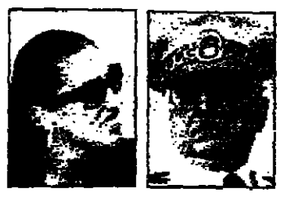
Bernie's ban

MRS BERNIE ECCLESTONE has a price on her head. Slavica (left), the wife of the Formula One boss, fears that enemies in her native Croatia have a contract out on her. The threat arose after her husband held discussions with Franjo Tudjman, her friend and the country's President, about holding a grand prix in the Balkan backwater. Ecclestone is taking the danger so seriously that he has banned his wife, who theoretically controls his £1.5 billion empire, from going home: "He won't let me go back because he's worried that I will be killed."

Ecclestone's wheeler-dealings with Tudjman (right) have already landed his wife in murky waters. The former Armani model appeared this year in an acrimonious court case in Zagreb in which she successfully repudiated an old flame's outrageous claim that she had been a high-class hooker.

"The rubbishing started after Bernie met Franjo," she tells me. "The court case was started by enemies of Franjo who wanted to undermine him through me."

What is it with Ecclestone? Whenever he tries to befriend politicians, it comes back to haunt him. His efforts to get close to Tony Blair by sending him a £1 million cheque rebounded when the money was returned. At least in Britain Slavica does not have to go into hiding when her hubby's networking goes wrong.



● *PHIL COLLINS is turning to jungle music. The housewives' favourite has been chosen by Disney to record the soundtrack for Tarzan, the corporation's next animated money-spinner. Crafting lyrics for the inarticulate rope-swinger could be a challenge.*

Verse reverse

OXFORD'S poets are for sale. After derision greeted Oxford University Press's announcement that it was to cancel its poetry list, I gather the publishers are now attempting to find a new home for the 50 or so bards.

OUP is cagey about exactly which publishers are involved in talks. But whoever comes to the rescue, the news will be greeted with relief by rhyming sorts such as Seamus Heaney, Andrew Motion and Tom Paulin, who have railed against the "clumsy and brutal" decision by OUP. They might be slightly less pleased, however, when they hear about the asking price: apparently it values the poets at a mere £1,000 each.

● *LORD SUDELEY defends the right of men in high places to dress up. The eccentric Monday Club chairman wants the next Conservative government to reverse the success of Lord Irvine of Lairg in dispensing with his wig and breeches. "The Lord Chancellor holds an important office of state and should not be wearing ordinary clothes," he says. Somehow I think William Hague has more pressing matters on his mind.*

Euro babble

TONY BLAIR is not wrong, just misunderstood. According to Denis MacShane, the Labour MP and Robin Cook aide, the PM has been receiving a hard time in Brussels because Eurocrats scrimp on good-quality interpreters.

To ensure better relations, MacShane is launching a campaign to ungarble what comes down Blair's earpiece during summits. "Interpreters recently translated French Socialist leaders as talking about militants," he says. "What the French actually meant were party members, but to us it has a rather different resonance."

● *SINEAD O'CONNOR (left) is training to be a psychic healer. The Irish singer has been attending the College of Psychic Studies in London to spruce up her spiritual powers. "I work as a sensitive," she says. "It used to be called a medium, a healer working through light energy." Luckily for us, O'Connor says she will not be using her growing powers for her own use, but rather to help others.*



Fund fracas

IS THE Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund stooping to dirty tricks? Alarmed by the public sympathy for Paul Burrell, her former butler who is being eased out of the fund, a source close to the trustees calls to explain the run-in: "There is nothing for him to do. All he has done for the past six months is go to parties." I thought that was what he was supposed to do.

● *DIVAS at war. Cher (right) and Bette Midler locked egos again at a concert in New York this week as each tried to outblitch the other. Round one went to Cher after she upstaged her fellow chanteuse by arriving noticeably late and pleading a bad hair-up day. Somewhat feebly, Bette attempted to fight back by tartly remarking once again that Cher "used to be famous". But Bette was handed the knockout blow when Cher performed on stage lip synching. When Bette's turn came, she joked to the audience "Start my tracks" before adding "No, I sing live".*



JASPER GERARD

THINKING LONG-TERM

A pension reform that helps the poor but costs money

Unlike many other Western countries, Britain does not face a pensions time bomb. Its demographics are more favourable, with a slower growth in the numbers of the elderly. Some 40 per cent of its future pensioners already have extra, private provision for their retirement. And the state pension itself, linked as it has been to prices rather than earnings, is in international terms less than generous.

That, however, is at the root of Britain's problem. The call on the State will not be unaffordable in, say, 2030. But if the system is not reformed, between a third and a half of those working today will be relying on extra state benefits, such as income support. These provide a barely adequate, and certainly undignified, level of assistance in old age.

Alistair Darling, the Secretary of State for Social Security, proposes to plug the gap in several ways. He intends to encourage (rather than compel) those who can save more for themselves to do so. And for the low-paid and the no-paid — carers, in particular — he will do their saving for them.

Will his measures do enough, without compulsion, to encourage more people to take out their own pensions? The new stakeholder pensions should be a cheaper, more flexible and more trustworthy vehicle for many who worried that personal pensions would trap them in an expensive scheme which soaked up much of their contributions in charges and forced them to pay regularly even if their circumstances changed. Those in companies that offer occupational schemes will be allowed to opt out only if they can show that they are providing for themselves adequately elsewhere. And the higher rebates that the Government is offering for those opting out of the state scheme offer an added incentive to go private.

But most of these measures assume levels of rationality and understanding that often elude people when it comes to the far distant future. If everyone were rational, no one would smoke cigarettes. Yet they do, even though the end result is more likely to be death than poverty in retirement. And, in an area as complicated as pensions, understanding is also poor. Mr Darling is proposing that everyone be sent an annual statement of the pension they can expect to earn. If these statements are anything like those sent by life assurance companies to their customers at the end of each year, they will be incomprehensible to all but the most enthusiastic savers.

Mr Darling hopes to increase from 40 to 60 per cent the share of pension spending undertaken by individuals rather than the State. With these proposals, he is likely to move in the right direction, but he may not achieve 60 per cent without further compulsion. Meanwhile, because total pension spending will rise, the taxpayer will continue to foot an ever higher bill. These suggestions do not save the State money; they just reduce the State's share of a much larger cake.

An extra £500 million a year will be spent on higher rebates to encourage middle-income earners to take out stakeholder pensions. And, of course, the State will eventually be paying out more in pensions for the low-paid and carers — some £5 billion a year in the long term.

In the end, this is a political judgment. The Government has opted to reward in old age those who undertake the unremunerative and sometimes thankless tasks of looking after the very young, the sick and the elderly. And, by offering a second pension rather than income support to the low-paid, it has removed the stigma of forcing them to rely on means-tested welfare when they retire. Both are noble causes. But neither is cost-free.

MURDER IN IRAN

Desperate signs of weakness at the top of the regime

The murders of prominent intellectuals and defenders of press freedom in Iran are a depressing indication that the power struggle in that country is far from over. Responsibility for the murders, which have horrified most Iranians, is not hard to establish: senior clerics may blame the killings on a foreign network and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei may talk of a link with "plots used against Iran by the Great Arrogance", a codeword for the United States. The truth is that the religious leadership is on the defensive and desperate to deflect a mounting public anger. Five years ago such killings could have been carried out with impunity; now, having seen a glimmer of freedom and democracy, Iranians will not accept a return to the dark age of clerical dictatorship.

Various explanations are given for the murder of three writers, the disappearance of another and the fatal stabbing of a secular opposition leader and his wife. One is that President Khatami's enemies are determined to discredit him by intimidating supporters and intellectual allies. The President remains immensely popular, and has refused to slow his persistent attempts to open up Iranian society and legitimise public debate of its theological underpinnings. Another reason may be the wish to forestall further planned reforms, which the ayatollahs would see as a threat to their power base.

The most likely explanation, however, is that this is a desperate action by those who feel that power is already slipping from their hands. Since Mr Khatami's election last year, much has changed. The press has criticised corruption within the ruling elite and has denounced the bullying by the thugs who call themselves guardians of public morality. The gradual opening to the West, the moderate attempts to raise the status of women and to widen choice during elections have all produced a society that is less cowed, more assertive of its rights and more determined to challenge the obscurantist policies of Ayatollah Khamenei and his allies.

Mr Khatami has suffered considerable setbacks. Law enforcement is still arbitrary and cruel, with stonings and beatings ordered after denunciations for offending Islamic morals. Attempts to distance the Government from the fatwa on Salman Rushdie have been vehemently denounced by those intent on encouraging the writer's murder. Iranian involvement in international terrorism appears to be less visible, but Western intelligence still sees an Iranian hand in much of the Middle East turbulence. And in the most visible showdown, the President was unable to protect the moderate Mayor of Tehran from the judicial vengeance of his enemies.

What frightens the religious leadership is the swelling public support for the modernisers. Thousands of people attended the funeral yesterday of Muhammad Mokhtari, one of the murdered writers. And more than a thousand students afterwards joined a public protest demanding the dismissal of Iran's chief judge and the heads of the intelligence and security services. Almost half Iran's population was born after the Shah was ousted, and is now demanding freedom. The ayatollahs know that it was just such demands, 20 years ago, by angry and determined students that overthrew imperial autocracy. No wonder they are desperate.

NOBEL CAUSES

Or the difference between literature and peace prizes

The classic controversy over a Nobel Peace prize comes when the recipient's wartime deeds are set against some later bid for peace. Politicians may turn from warrior to peacemaker, sometimes with a speed that embarrasses. When the prize goes not to a statesman but to a conscience-raising writer, the potential embarrassment ought, one might think, to be less.

Not so, it seems. The Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchu won the prize in 1992 for a story of her own life; and she won more than the usual international renown for her moving and articulate advocacy of Guatemala's Indians. For a certain sort of peace-lover a prizewinnner who has never been to war is a better peace-prize winner. She was garlanded accordingly.

Now it appears that she was not merely economical but positively inventive with the *actualité* in her own life story. For childhood exploitation we should now read private Catholic boarding school. For brutality of landlord over peasant, we must now see a squabble between her own wealthy father and his in-laws.

This must shatter her credibility and that of her laureateship in a way that no mere politician has ever achieved. It will be sad if her disgrace threatens sympathy for Guatemala's poor. But Ms Menchu, like many descriptive writers without Nobel ambitions, has done her subjects no good.

Fraudsters should beware: there is a growing fashion for exposure. The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Janet Cooke moved the judges of that prestigious award in 1980 with her account of an eight-year-old black boy hooked on heroin. But the only addiction Ms Cooke could really bear witness to was her own to invention. Her juvenile junkie was cooked up in her own mind — to the satisfaction of Americans who believed that the black underclass had far too much help already. Other American journalists have more recently followed the same treacherous path.

The director of the Norwegian Nobel Institute takes a more sanguine view of Ms Menchu's transgressions, commenting that "all autobiographies embellish to a greater or lesser extent". The greater is certainly true in Ms Menchu's case.

Perhaps her sympathisers should not mind so much. In her lies they may find the essence of a story both more believable and appealing than the myth of poverty which she spun. From Robert Owen to Clement Attlee, the bourgeoisie have advanced the cause of the toiling poor more effectively than any ragged-trousered philanthropist. The desire among radicals to prove themselves prolier-than-thou often ends in disaster.

The spirit of noblesse, or even bourgeois, oblige is something to be celebrated, especially when it springs up in Guatemala's unforgiving soil rather than our own more ordered pastures. Ms Menchu's obligations remain unfulfilled.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Future of Europe's defence industries

From Dr Alex Ashbourne

Sir, William Rees-Mogg ("Britain, a nation of subcontractors", December 14) objects to the potential merger between British Aerospace (BAe) and Daimler Chrysler Aerospace (Dasa), for fear that Britain's defence industrial capability will fall into the control of foreign hands. But there is no real alternative.

I run a working group on the future of the European defence industry composed of industrialists, academics, journalists and members of the Armed Forces from both Europe and the US. The group is adamant that consolidation has to occur in order for the European industry to remain competitive in export markets and to provide better value for money for national defence ministries.

Joint ventures, such as between British Aerospace and Matra, can still not compete on an equal footing against the three largest defence companies in the US, Lockheed Martin, Boeing and Raytheon. Equality with the US can only be achieved by full-scale mergers of European companies.

But it is wrong to suggest that Britain should ally itself with the French rather than the Germans. At present, it is France which is delaying the entire European restructuring process. Even though the French Government has taken huge strides towards the privatisation of its industry, it has not gone far enough. As one German industrialist said to me: "You cannot expect me to merge my company with the French State!" France's retaliatory threat to block the restructuring of Airbus if the BAe-Dasa merger goes ahead merely reinforces this position.

Restructuring Europe's defence industry in an age of shrinking markets is a complex process. One has to take into account issues such as national interests, the differing roles of national governments and attitudes to the transatlantic relationship, and the importance of harmonising requirements. Any move by BAe and Dasa, with or without GEC, is just the start of the vital (and indeed inevitable) process of European consolidation. For surely it is better for Britain to have a shared European defence industrial capability than no capability at all?

Yours faithfully,
ALEX ASHBOURNE
(Defence Analyst),
Centre for European Reform,
29 Tufton Street, SW1P 3QL.
December 14.

Transport solutions

From Mr Philip Alsop

Sir, If this Government is serious about solving the country's growing transport crisis (report, "Employers face big charges for workplace car parking", December 8), it would do well to look at integrated networks; not, as is so often touted, integrated transport networks, but integrated computer networks.

Large numbers of people up and down the land make the daily trudge to work who need not be office-based at all, but could work quite easily from home or a satellite business village. A computer and modem is virtually all it takes.

If the Government were to offer financial incentives to those companies who help solve the transport problem, rather than penalise those companies who continue to cause it, wouldn't we all be considerably better off?

Yours sincerely,
PHILIP ALSOP,
1 Close Lane, Rowde,
Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2QG.
phil@fieldbus.com
December 8.

Bare facts

From Professor David Rhind

Sir, I hope Philip Treleaven's project to map the shape of numerous British anatomies (report, December 5) is more successful than mine. Around 1970, my colleagues and I at the Royal College of Art sought to build and use a machine to do just that. Ours used much more primitive technology — but the technology was not the biggest problem. Like Philip, we required that all participants had to remove their clothes.

To our chagrin, we found a large proportion of our guinea-pigs were reluctant to unveil themselves, even for our three-dimensional cameras. Modest financial incentives worked for students but for almost no one else. On the other hand, a few people delighted in taking off their clothes, but they caused other problems.

Finally, Philip may have to face a new problem: the new data protection legislation. If digital details of one's own anatomy do not merit protection under privacy laws, what does?

Yours nostalgically,
DAVID RHIND
(Vice-Chancellor and Principal),
City University,
Northampton Square, EC1V 0HB.
d.rhind@city.ac.uk
December 8.

Business letters, page 27

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Ethical aspects of human cloning

From Mr Peter Garrett

Sir, The reports on human cloning (details, December 8 and 9; letters, December 10) are long on utilitarianism and short on ethics. Ministers are being recommended to accept the creation and destruction of cloned human beings in order to produce tissues for transplantation.

Strip away the spin about "stem cells" and "fertilised eggs"; the cloned creations are real human beings, and human beings, no matter how small, should not be used as means to an end, but must be treated as ends in themselves.

Driven by the blandishments and promises of "therapeutic" cloning, the ailing individual allows scientists to produce genetically identical siblings for the sole purpose of using them, after killing them, for the required spare parts. This is a form of technological cannibalism and exemplifies man's inhumanity to man.

By treating our own kind as morally insignificant we lose sight of ourselves in the moral maze and forget what it means to be human. LIFE calls again upon ministers to ignore the recommendations of the report and to ban all types of human cloning.

Yours faithfully,
P. GARRETT
(Research Director), LIFE UK,
LIFE House,
Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire CV32 4EA.
December 10.

From Dr Jeremy Bray

Sir, Simon Jenkins ("One me is not enough", December 9) might like to live for ever, and to have another SJ every thirty years or so. But would he like to be overrun by another 30 JBs every year, just because I have rather more friends among the clinical geneticists?

It is utter tripe for him to say Britain is now the world capital of the ban on human reproductive cloning. The Human Genome Advisory Commission's report, *Cloning Issues in Reproduction, Science and Medicine*, makes it clear that most European countries and the international organisations have similar positions, or are moving towards them.

In America, the issue was so sensitive because of association with abortion policies that President Clinton fired off demands for the US National Bioethics Advisory Commission to advise him within 90 days of Dolly the cloned sheep's appearance. *Nature* reports (November 26) that the influence of the international genetics research community is leading to a clarification of China's 1994 Maternal and Infant Health Care Law on non-eugenic lines.

Britain continues to attract genetic researchers. Simon Jenkins is right when he says it is the most exciting area of medical research.

Yours faithfully,
JEREMY BRAY,
21 Horn Lane, Linton,
Cambridgeshire CB1 6HT.
jeremy.bray@dial.pipex.com
December 10.

From Mr Paul Perrin

Sir, Scientists are often too close to the ethical edge to notice when they have crossed it.

Given that the Government seems happy for us to be innocently led into eating genetically engineered soya (and other tainted foods), how will those of us who find human conception with the *intent* of termination as disgusting as the production of cow/human cross-breeding, ensure that we can avoid all contact, consumption and support of any products, methods or organisations related to this murderous and unnatural practice?

Yours faithfully,
PAUL PERRIN,
95 Trevelyan Road,
Tooting, SW17 9LR.
December 10.

Pinochet's appeal

From Professor Geraldine Van Bueren

Sir, The cynical attempt by General Pinochet to set aside a House of Lords judgment on the grounds of the alleged bias of one of their lordships ignores the traditional and valuable unpaid role which many distinguished judges have performed on the boards of charitable branches of human rights organisations.

It is not only the organisations which benefit. Society itself benefits from having a responsive judiciary rather than one which is insulated from the breadth and gravity of human problems.

It would also be extraordinary to believe that being against torture is a bias. This is rather like asking judges to stand down because they are in favour of human decency and dignity.

Yours sincerely,
GERALDINE VAN BUEREN,
Faculty of Law,
Queen Mary and Westfield College,
London E1 4NS.
December 10.

From Mr John Hardy

Sir, With all due respect to Sir Frederick Lawton (letter, December 11), the European Convention on Extradition became part of the United Kingdom's domestic law on May 14, 1991. It contains no requirement for a Convention state to adduce sufficient admissible evidence to establish a prima facie case against the person whose return has been requested.

Spain is a party to the Convention. Accordingly issues of sufficiency and admissibility of evidence do not arise in the context of an extradition request by the Spanish Government. With the accession of several fledgeling Eastern European democracies to the Convention, many people will be concerned at the abandonment of such a sensible safeguard.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN HARDY,
3 Raymond Buildings,
Gray's Inn, WC1R 5BH.
December 11.

From Miss Rosemary Combridge

Sir, The wealth of options open to General Pinochet to challenge his extradition to Spain contrasts starkly with the "single right of appeal" — proposed by the Home Secretary in the July 1998 White Paper, *Fairer, Faster And Firmer: A Modern Approach To Immigration And Asylum* — for asylum-seekers claiming to be fleeing from the sort of treatment which the general is accused of having authorised.

If the United Kingdom is to retain credibility as a refuge for the oppressed, the anticipated Bill will have to be very different from the White Paper.

Yours faithfully,
R. N. COMBRIDGE,
11 Holland Park Avenue, W11 3RL.
December 10.

Pope's stalactites

From Mr Anthony Beckles Willson

Sir, You report that the British Cave Research Association has cleared Alexander Pope of the blame for having stalactites shot from the roof of the Wookey Hole cavern to decorate his grotto: he was given them by the 4th Earl of Elgin after all ("Poet pardoned over cave theft after 250 years", December 8). However, even this account may be incorrect.

According to the 1745 record, what Pope actually accommodated near his grotto was "a fine and very uncommon petrifaction from Okey-Hole in Somersetshire from Mr Bruce". Dr Trevor Shaw's invaluable research, published in *Cave and Karst Science* (vol 25, number 1), has shown that this was not a stalactite, it was a stalagmite growing up from the floor of the cave, sawn off at its base, and one of several taken at the same time. Where they all went remains a mystery. Also, the real identity of Mr Bruce has not been established: it is only speculation that he was Lord Charles Bruce, who became the 4th Earl of Elgin in 1741.

The truncated stalagmites in Wookey Hole are re-forming and now have 250 years' new growth to their credit. Perhaps, by the time they have regained their former stature the true story will have emerged.

Yours faithfully,
TONY BECKLES WILLSON
(Author, *Alexander Pope's Grotto in Twickenham*, 1998),
44 Popes Avenue,
Twickenham, TW2 5TL.
ynotbw@globalnet.co.uk
December 9.

Illegal immigration

From Mr James Stuart-Menteth

Sir, You report (earlier editions, December 7) the Government's plan to fine road hauliers £2,000 when illegal immigrants are found in their vehicles. This is a very negative and short-sighted approach to the problem since, with both the lorry driver and the immigrant at risk from the law, collusion would seem to be their only practical means of escape.

Just the slightest lateral thinking leads to a more positive solution which should generate the required response: pay the driver £50 for each immigrant that he turns in to the authorities.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES STUART-MENTETH,
1408 Princes Building,
10 Chater Road, Central, Hong Kong.
s_mnellbank@hotmail.com

Time out of joint

From Sir George Engle, QC

Sir, If "the Latin poet Quintus Horatius Flaccius" (*sic*) had really penned the original of "Seize the day" (Tony Blair's contribution to MIND's "Advice for Life" display at Waterloo Station) "about 65 BC" (report, December 9), his last name should have been Precocious, since he was born on December 9 in that very year.

The ode (i.xi) containing the exhortation *Carpe diem*, though written earlier, was not published until Horace was over 40. Perhaps Mr Blair's choice was influenced by fellow-feeling, since "Flaccus" is the Latin for flap-eared.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE ENGLE,
32 Wood Lane,
Highgate, N6 5UB.
December 9.

Teaching quality in smaller classes

From Mrs K. Joy Saunders

Sir, As an Ofsted-registered inspector, I am intrigued by the Audit Commission's research into class sizes (report and leading article, December 7).

For nearly six years I have dutifully filled in the number of pupils present and on roll for each of the thousands of lessons I have seen. Ofsted must now have millions of lesson notes on its data base, and should be able to do a full statistical analysis by class size, age group, subject and ability level. I am not aware of any findings published as yet based on this incomparable source of evidence.

For my own interest I analysed about 150 lessons in mixed-ability classes in a comprehensive school with a good catchment area. Where classes had more than 27 on roll, lessons were graded much lower overall for the quality of teaching, quality of learning (including behaviour) and progress made in the lesson and over time, than in smaller classes, although attainment was only slightly below the national average.

If I were a parent of a child in that school I would not be very happy to hear that my child, although almost at the national average for attainment, was making poor progress, messing around in class and being badly taught. I would be asking whether my child could do even better in a small class.

Perhaps Ofsted would release its data for the fuller analysis needed to put our minds at rest. Otherwise I shall suspect I have been wasting a lot of time — and taxpayers' money — filling in those little boxes.

Yours faithfully,
K. J. SAUNDERS,
(Education Consultant),
11a Honey Hill,
Fenstanton, Huntingdon PE18 9JP.
December 9.

Religion at the margins

From Mr Alan Forward

Sir, The Archbishop of York's concern that the BBC is marginalising religion (report, December 12) may be contrasted with the Church of England's part in the Churches' joint millennium planning body's intention to present every household with a candle and a prayer at the millennium (report, October 9; letters, October 16).

This plan will cost £6 million and there will be no mention of God or of the birth of Christ in the prayer.

Surely the Church of England must act to correct this inexplicable marginalisation of God at such a significant moment in our lives.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN J. FORWARD,
The Lindens,
Poyntington, Dorset DT9 4LF.
December 13.

Reduced to ashes

From Dr L. R. Mustoe

Sir, It is not the latest defeat of the England cricket team which is so depressing; rather, it is the manner of their defeat.

There seems to be a perception among our "specialist bowlers" that they should not be expected to achieve double figures when batting, or stay at the crease sufficiently long to allow team-mates higher up the order an opportunity to add significantly to the innings total. The team management must dispel this perception and give the bowlers some elementary batting tuition.

The management response to this shortcoming has been, however, to reduce the number of specialist bowlers to four, with one of the specialist batsmen doubling as wicket-keeper (and, incidentally, captain).

Time for a rethink?

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE MUSTOE,
18 Coniston Crescent, Loughborough,
Leicestershire LE11 3RH.
l.r.mustoe@lboro.ac.uk
December 15.

Glory, glory days

From Mr Matthew Howes

Sir, The problem of pop groups falsely trading on past glories (report, "Tell it like it is, revived rock bands are warned", December 9) has spread to other areas of the entertainment industry.

As a supporter of Tottenham Hotspur for thirty years I have noticed that teams of recent years bear little resemblance to those of the Sixties in personnel, style and success.

Perhaps the Advertising Standards Authority could investigate.

Yours faithfully,
MATTHEW HOWES,
19 Queens Road,
Brentwood, Essex CM14 4HE.

A singular feat

From Mr Patrick Fisher

Sir, I feel increasingly left behind by today's youngsters.

How will one in seven manage to have unsafe sex over Christmas (report, December 7).

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK FISHER,
29 Carlyle Road,
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire.
December 7.

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 15: The Queen met a group of embroiderers and viewed their ornaments on the Christmas Tree in the Picture Gallery at Buckingham Palace.

Mr John Holmes was received by The Queen upon the relinquishment of his appointment as Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister when Her Majesty invested him with the Insignia of a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

The Rt Hon Tony Blair, MP (Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury) had an audience of The Queen this evening.

The Queen was represented by Mrs Robert de Pass at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Mrs Susan Barrantes which was held at St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge, London, today. The Duke of York and The Duchess of Kent attended.

The Duke of Edinburgh was represented by Sir Brian McGrath.

The Prince of Wales was represented by Lord Patrick Beresford.

The Prince Edward was represented by Lieutenant Colonel Sean O'Dwyer.

The Duke of Kent was represented by The Duchess of Kent.

Princess Alexandra, the Hon Lady Ogilvy was represented by Captain Neil Blair, RN.

The Lady Susan Hussey has succeeded Lady Dugdale as Lady in Waiting to The Queen.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Master, this evening, attended a Service of Thanksgiving for the work of the Lighthouse Keepers over the Centuries at St Olave's Church, Hart Street, followed by a Dinner for Lighthouse Keepers at Trinity House, London, EC3.

CLARENCE HOUSE
December 15: Dame Frances Campbell-Preston has succeeded the Hon Mrs Rhodes as Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
December 15: The Prince of Wales, President of Business in the Community, this morning hosted a report back seminar at St James's Palace State Apartments with business leaders who attended his Autumn 1998 "Seeing is Believing" Programme to promote business-driven community regeneration.

The Prince of Wales, President of The Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture, this afternoon presided at a Council Meeting.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
December 15: The Princess Royal, President, British Knitting and Clothing Export Council, this morning visited Duchamp, 2A West Point, 39-40 Warple Way, Acton, Ealing, London W3.

Her Royal Highness subsequently opened the Crown Street Surgery, Crown Street, Acton, Ealing, London W3.

The Princess Royal, President, the Save the Children Fund, this afternoon launched the Millennium Award Scheme "Staying Power" at the Cafe Royal, London W1.

Her Royal Highness, President, Animal Health Trust, this evening attended the Christmas Celebration Dinner at the Banqueting House, Whitehall, London SW1.

KENSINGTON PALACE
December 15: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon this evening attended 'The Spirit of Christmas', a Carol Concert in aid of the Grosvenor Chapel Restoration Appeal, of which Her Royal Highness is Patron, and The Home Farm Trust, held at the Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street, London, W1.

KENSINGTON PALACE
December 15: Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation, this afternoon received Field Marshal Sir Roland Gibbs on relinquishing his appointment as President and Field Marshal Sir John Chapple upon assuming the appointment.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
RICHMOND PARK
December 15: Princess Alexandra, President, accompanied by the Rt Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, this evening attended a Christmas Carol Concert in aid of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund at St Paul's Cathedral, London.

Royal engagements

The Duke of Edinburgh will visit Priory Campus, Pontefract Road, Lundwood, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, at 11.20; will visit Rotherham Markets, Wharncliffe Street, at 12.15 to open the new roof; will visit LuK (UK), Waleswood Road, Waleshar, Sheffield, at 12.45; and will open Sheffield Airport at 2.05.

The Princess Royal, president, the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, will visit Pembrokeshire Carers Centre, Meyler House, St Thomas Green, Haverfordwest, Dyfed, at 9.30, will visit their new Carers Centre at 104 Mansel Street, Swansea, at 11.45 and will attend a luncheon at County Hall, Oystermouth Road, Swansea at 12.15; as President, British Knitting and Clothing Export Council, will visit Frank Theak and Roskilly, 3 Somerset Road, Cwmbran, at 2.30; and as president, Missions to Seamen, will visit their new building at Alexandra Docks, Newport, at 3.50.

The Duke of Kent will visit Poole High School, Wimborne Road, Poole, to open the new Performing Arts Centre at 9.00; will visit the Facilities Centre, Day Centre and Social and Education Centre at Stourview Social Services Centre, Sturminster Newton, Dorset, at 11.00; and will visit DEK Printing Machines, 11 Albany Road, Granby Industrial Estate, Weymouth, Dorset, at 2.00.


TRICIA JOHNSON

Lindy Bird with three examples of the floral teddies, soldiers and Teletubbies she has on display at the show

Toys take over Christmas flower show

BY ALAN TOOGOOD
HORTICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

BURNCOOSE Nurseries, of Redruth, Cornwall, renowned for their imaginative exhibits, have created a Mediterranean scene for the "Three Kings bearing gifts" at the Royal Horticultural Society's Christmas flower show.

The display features hardy palms, covered leaved phormiums and cordylines, and yuccas, none native to the Mediterranean but often grown there.

Gold medals have been awarded to more seasonal exhibits, including a display of ivies from Fibrex Nurseries, of Pebworth, Warwickshire. Arranged under gold variegated, silver variegated and speckled leaf kinds, many are trained as standards and pillars.

Another gold medal has been awarded to Lincluden Nursery, of Bisley Green, Surrey, for a display which demonstrates the use of conifers for winter foliage colour. Some are bronze, as in Podocarpus "County Park Fire", and many are gold, including the Scots pine "Gold Coin". One of the most distinctive gold conifers is a Japanese cedar Cryptomeria japonica "Sekkan-Sugi" with pendulus branchlets.

African violets or Saintpaulias seem to be in flower all through the year and certainly the African Violet Centre, of Terrington St Clement, Norfolk, another gold medallist, has staged a fine display.

The top Christmas pot plant, the poinsettia, is being featured by several exhibitors at this show, which opened in Westminster yesterday. Plants sold by supermarkets are invariably in the Sonora series. Several of these are being shown by D'Arcy and Everest, of Somersham, Cambridgeshire, including "White Sonora" and "Pink Sonora." Another popular cultivar is "Marble Star" with pink and cream flower bracts.

Poinsettias with variegated leaves are rarely seen but W.E.Th. Ingwersen, of Gravetye, West Sussex, is showing several in the Silverstar series, with pink, red and white flower bracts.

A breath of summer is provided by Peter J. Smith, of Ashington, West Sussex, with a display of new hybrid dianthus, Gipsy series, bred especially for cutting — the sprays of small scented flowers on 18in tall stems last for three weeks in water. The normal flowering period is June to October. Returning to palms, an unusual species has been included in the display of plants for winter interest from P W Plants, of Kenninghall, Norfolk. The fan palm Trachycarpus wagnerianus, from China and Japan, only known in cultivation, is hardy in mild regions. Being relatively dwarf, it would be suitable for growing in a patio tub.

The RHS relaxes the rules for this festive show, which has toys as a theme, so do not be surprised to find exhibitors dressed as Teletubbies and toy soldiers.

The show, in the New Horticultural Hall, Greycoat Street, Westminster is open today from 10am to 5pm.

Commemoration service

Sir Thomas Hungerford
A service was held in St Leonard's Chapel, Farleigh Hungerford Castle, to commemorate the 600th anniversary of the death of Sir Thomas Hungerford, the first recorded Speaker of the House of Commons. The Rev Robin Hungerford and the Rev Trevor Cook officiated, assisted by five clergymen. Lord Weatherill read the lesson. The Bishop of Bath and Wells gave an address. Lord Weatherill, Speaker of the House of Commons 1983-92, was the speaker at a dinner held afterwards at the castle. Among those attending were:

Lady Weatherill, the Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire and Lady Johnston, Lord Dean of Harptree, Dr Sally Thompson, the High Sheriff of Wiltshire, Sir Donald Hawley, the High Sheriff of Dorset and Mrs Peter Gregson, Mr David Heath, MP, Mr and Mrs Arthur King, and members of the Hungerford family.

Memorial service

Mrs Hector Barrantes
The Queen was represented by Mrs Robert de Pass and the Duke of Edinburgh by Sir Brian McGrath at a service of thanksgiving for the life of Mrs Hector Barrantes held yesterday at St Paul's, Knightsbridge.

The Prince of Wales was represented by Lord Patrick Beresford, who also gave an address. The Duke of York read a lesson. Princess Beatrice of York and Princess Eugenie of York, granddaughters, attended. Prince Edward was represented by Lieutenant-Colonel Sean O'Dwyer.

The Duke of Kent was represented by the Duchess of Kent and Princess Alexandra by Captain Neil Blair, RN.

The Rev Christopher Courtauld officiated, assisted by Father John Fordham. Major Bryan Wright, brother, Sarah Duchess of York and Mrs Jane Luedecke, daughters, and Mr Seamus Makin, grandson, gave readings. The Ambassador of Argentina attended. Among others present were:

Miss Ayesha Makin (granddaughter), Mr and Mrs Julian Salmond (brother-in-law and sister), Lady Loch (sister), Mr and Mrs David Morrison, Mr and Mrs Peregrine Chadwyck-Healey, Mr and Mrs James Boughey, Miss Clare Boughey, Viscount and Viscountess Head, Mr and Mrs Tony Penrose and other members of the family and friends.

Dinner

Foundation for Science and Technology
Lord Jenkin of Roding, Chairman of the Council of the Foundation for Science and Technology, presided at a lecture and dinner discussion held last night at the Royal Society.

Professor George Fleming and Mr John Lane were the speakers. Among those present were:

Lord Beloff, FBA, Lord and Lady Butterworth, Lord Flowers, FRS, Baroness Hilton of Eggardon, Lady Kennet, Lord Quirk, FBA, Lord Soulsbury of Swaffham Prior, Lord Walton of Detchant, Sir Austin Bide, Sir Geoffrey Chipperfield, Sir William Francis, Sir Robin Ibbs, Lady Lane, Sir John Maddox, Sir Ronald Mason, FRS, Dr Dame Anne McLaren, FRS, Sir Alan Muir Wood, FRS, Mr Michael Connarty, MP, Mr Tam Dalyell, MP, Mr Gerald Dauid and Dr Eric Duckworth.

Forthcoming marriages

Dr R.E. Brenner and Dr D.M. Davis
The engagement is announced between Robert, son of Mr and Mrs Alan Brenner, of Hampstead, London, and Diana, youngest daughter of Dr and Mrs Stanley Davis, of Hampstead Garden Suburb, London.

Mr A.J.R. Button and Miss H.E. Stratford
The engagement is announced between Andrew, eldest son of Dr and Mrs Robert Button, of Four Marks, Hampshire, and Helen, only daughter of Mr and Mrs John Stratford, of Fordingbridge, Hampshire.

Mr P.M.N. Cherry and Miss M.I.N. Jones
The engagement is announced between Paul, elder son of the late Mr Charles H. Cherry and of Mrs F.E. Cherry, of Sheffield, and Melissa, elder daughter of the late Squadron Leader Neville H. Jones and of Mrs Jean M. Jones, of Sevenoaks, Kent.

Mr J.A. Egan and Miss E.M. Moore
The engagement is announced between James, son of Mr Michael and Dr Hazel Egan, of Blackheath, and Karen, daughter of Mr Lawrence and Mrs Kay Moore, of The Curragh, Co Kildare.

Mr J.W. Reader and Miss C.H. Pallister
The engagement is announced between John William, eldest son of Mr and Mrs J.S. Reader, of Gressenhall, Norfolk, and Charlotte, daughter of Mr and Mrs T.J.B. Pallister, of Tunstead, Norfolk.

Mr J.B. Rugman and Miss J.F. Walton
The engagement is announced between John, son of Mr and Mrs Brian Rugman, of Alveston, Gloucestershire, and Joanna, daughter of Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs John Walton, of Longworth Manor, Oxfordshire.

Mr A.L. Weller and Miss C.D. Chapman
The engagement is announced between Adrian, only son of Mr Leslie Weller, of West Grinstead, and Mrs Joyce Weller, of Midhurst, and Charlotte, only daughter of Mr and Mrs John Chapman, of Ashurst, West Sussex.

Mr S.E. Watts and Miss M.L. Jones
The engagement is announced between Simon, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Alan Watts, of Loders, Dorset, and Melissa, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Alan Jones, of Melbourne, Australia.

Birthdays today

Mr J.M. Blackburn, chief executive, Halifax Building Society, 57; Mr N.C. Blamey, artist, 84; Sir Michael Carlisle, former chairman, Trent Regional Health Authority, 69; Sir Arthur C. Clarke, science writer, 81; Mr Richard Cockerill, rugby union player, 28; Her Hon Myrella Cohen, QC, 71; Professor Bernard Crick, political writer, 69; the Hon Peter Dickinson, author, 71; Mrs Jacqueline Duncan, Principal, Inchbald School of Design, 67; Mr Joel Garner, former cricketer, 46; Sir Robert Gunn, former chairman, The Boots Company, 73; Miss Heather Hallett, QC, 49; Sir Jasper Hollom, former Deputy Governor, Bank of England, 81; Lord Mottistone, 73; Mr Trevor Pinnock, harpsichordist and conductor, 52; Lieutenant-General Sir David Scott-Barrett, 76; Mr N. Shibata, chairman and chief executive, Gestetner Holdings, 60; Miss Liv Ullmann, actress, 60; Mr W.H.P. Whatley, trade unionist, 76; General Sir Roger Wheeler, 57.

Eton College

Eton College closes today.
Mr J.G. James, MBE, has taken up his appointment as School Bursar.
The Newcastle Classical Prizes have been awarded to C.P.W. Fielding OS and G. Morton Jack and the Hordey Prize has been awarded to P.A.C. Hand KS. In the final of the House Association Dr T.C. Basey's defeated Mr J.M. Noakes by three goals to two.
School opens for the Lent Half on Wednesday, January 13.

Reception

Airey Neave Trust
Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, was the guest of honour at a reception held at the House of Commons last night by the Airey Neave Trust to mark the publication of Preventing Torture by Dr Malcolm Evans and Professor Rod Morgan. Mr Robert Jackson, MP, was the sponsor and the Hon Sir Adam Butler, chairman of the trust, was the host.

Three Faiths Forum

Sheikh Dr M.A. Zaki Badawi was presented yesterday, at the House of Commons, with the Interfaith Award of the Three Faiths Forum for his outstanding contribution to Muslim-Christian-Jewish relations. Mr Alderman and Sheriff Gavyn Arthur delivered a message from the Lord Mayor of London and presented the award. Sir Sigmund Sternberg presided. The Duke of Bragança was present.

Northern Circuit

Mr Peter Birkett, QC, has been elected to succeed Mr Richard Henriques, QC, as Leader of the Northern Circuit for a three year term commencing on January 1, 1999.

Service luncheon

RAF Club
Air Vice-Marshal K.D. Filbey, Chairman of the Royal Air Force Club, and Group Captain A.J.R. Banks jointly presided at the members' annual Christmas luncheon held yesterday at the club.

Luncheon

Institute of Physics
Dr Brian Manley presided at a luncheon of the Institute of Physics held yesterday at the Goring Hotel, Victoria, for representatives of the institute's corporate affiliate companies. Sir Derek Roberts, Provost of University College London, was the speaker.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Catherine of Aragon, first wife of King Henry VIII, Alcala de Henares, Spain, 1485; Ludwig van Beethoven, composer, Bonn, 1770; Jane Austen, novelist, Steventon Rectory, Hampshire, 1775; Zoltan Kodaly, composer, Kecskemet, Hungary, 1882; Sir John (Jack) Hobbs, cricketer, Cambridge, 1882; Sir Noel Coward, playwright and composer, London, 1899.

DEATHS: Wilhelm Grimm, collector of folk tales, Berlin, 1859; Glenn Miller, dance band leader, reported missing in flight to France, 1944.

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That the dead are raised to life again is shown by Moses himself in the story of the burning bush when he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob'. Luke 20 : 37,38.

BIRTHS

BETT - On December 9th at Princess Royal Hospital to Colette and Andrew, a son, Harry William Towgood.

BROSNAN - On December 14th 1998 to Sue (née Duke) and Sean, a daughter, Jessica Louise, a sister for James.

EDEN - On December 9th at The Portland Hospital to Liann (née Bartlett) and Andrew, a daughter, Rebecca Marjorie.

EDWARDS - Henrietta Clare (née Masters) and Peter on 9th December 1998 at home, a son, Matthew Julian Robert, a brother for Jonathan. With thanks to all the Wantage Midwives Oxon.

EVANS - On December 9th at The Portland Hospital to Pippa (née Palmer) and Nick, a daughter Eleanor - thanks to all concerned.

EVANS - On December 11th to Clare (née Sant) and Russell, a son, Joseph.

GARCIA - On December 5th at The Portland Hospital to Toni Swan and Andy, a double whammy, twin sons, Stefan Antony and Oscar Andreson.

GIANNOULIS - On December 12th at The Portland Hospital to Katingo (née Hadjipateras) and Anthony, a son, Dimitris.

MATHER - On December 3rd 1998 in Melbourne, Australia to Anna (née Hopkins) and John, a beautiful daughter and first child, Georgina Victoria. Deo Gratias.

McKEOWN - On December 8th at The Portland Hospital to Alison (née Davies) and Mark, a daughter, Emily Nicola.

RABINOWITZ - On December 10th at The Portland Hospital to Fiona and Brian, a son, another gorgeous brother for Miriam, Chaim, Gedaliah and Yudit.

BIRTHS

ROBERTS - On December 10th at The Portland Hospital to Frankie (née Anderson) and Simon, a son, George, a brother for Alice.

DEATHS

BARTON - Dr. Dorothy Atherton D.O.M.S., peacefully at St. Lukes Nursing Home on 11th December 1998, aged 100 years. Funeral Service to take place at Oxford Crematorium on Monday 21st December at 12 noon. All enquiries to S & R Childs, Funeral Services. Tel:01865 427272.

BATTELL - Jack (Edward John) aged 82. Suddenly and peacefully on Monday 14th December 1998 at R.C.H. Treliske Truro in the 60th year of his marriage to Jean. Much loved and missed by her, his sons, Jon and Tim, and their respective wives, Catherine and Julie and his grandchildren Justin, Tammy, Lizzy and Jane. Funeral service at Truro Cathedral on Friday 18th December at 12.30 pm. All welcome. No mourning and family flowers only. Donations if desired for Friends of Truro Cathedral c/o Truro Co-operative Funeral Service St Clement Street, Truro TR1 1EQ Tel: 01872 273 982.

BENTLEY - Diana Frances, passed away peacefully on 11th December 1998. Formerly of Long Melford and Red House, Sudbury. Sadly missed by her brother Michael and wife Alice, her godchildren Timothy and Jill, her nieces, cousins and friends. The funeral takes place today at West Suffolk Crematorium, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. Donations may be sent c/o Co-operative Funeral Service, Cornard Road, Sudbury Suffolk. CO10 2XA. Tel: 01787 372736.

DEATHS

BLOMEFIELD - On 8th December 1998 in Gloucester, Angela, widow of Judge Peregrine Blomefield. Funeral at Gloucester Crematorium on Friday, 18th December, at 3.30 pm. Flowers to crematorium or donations to RNLI. Memorial service will be announced later.

de FREITAS - Helen, peacefully at home on 14th December, aged 88. Beloved wife of the late Geoffrey, dearly loved mother of Frankie, Graham, Roger and Patrick. Funeral Service on Monday 21st December, Holy Innocents Church, Paddenswick Road, Hammersmith, London W6 at 2.00pm. Family flowers only, donations, if desired, to Trees for London, c/o Barnes & Sons, 151 Ashcew Road, London W12 9AD. A celebration of Helen's life will be held in the spring.

DISS - Harry George (Pip) on 13th December 1998, suddenly but peacefully in a nursing home after a short illness, aged 86. Funeral at Breakspear Crematorium, Ruislip, Middlesex, on Monday 21st December at 11.45 am. All enquiries to Phillips Funeral Services, 01727-851006.

GILLIARD - Cecilie. Peacefully in hospital on 12th December aged 82, after a short illness. Much loved mother of John David, wife of Wg Cdr John Philip RAF (died at Arnhem). Dearly loved mother-in-law of her family and friends. Funeral at Linch Church 11.30 am on 22nd December. Family flowers. Donations RNIB and Cancer Macmillan Nurses via L.F. Lintott's. Tel: 01730 813264.

HIRD - On December 12th at home in Almondbury, Huddersfield, George Frederick Hird FRCS, aged 79 years. Beloved husband of the late Molly, dearly loved father of Sarah and Diana and a devoted grandfather of Phillip and Katie. Service takes place at the Parish Church of All Hallows, Almondbury on Monday December 21st at 11.00am, to be followed by interment at Hove Cemetery. Hove on Tuesday 22nd at 12 noon. Will friends please accept this, the only intimation and kindly meet at the church. All flowers to the Highfield Funeral Home, Huddersfield, please.

HOLDER - Nigel, Professor of Anatomy and Developmental Biology, University College London, on Friday 11th December 1998, aged 45. Beloved husband of Alyson and father of Daniel and Michael. Funeral Service will take place at Leatherhead Crematorium Friday 18th December at 11.00 am. A Memorial Service will take place at University College London in the new year. A Nigel Holder Memorial Fund has been established to provide travelling fellowships for young developmental biologists. Tel: 0171 419 3346.

HOLDER - On 11th December, peacefully in her sleep, Veronica Holder (née Gillott) aged 79. Widow of James, much loved mother of Quentin, Jane Annesley and Verity Cridland and a devoted grandmother to Melanie, Cressida, James and David. Requiem Mass and interment will take place at St. James' Church, Sawsley, Cumbria on Saturday, 19th December at 12.30p.m. No flowers, but donations if desired to Holebird Cheshire Homes, c/o Hayes & Parkinson Ltd., Captain French Lane, Kendal, LA9 6HS.

HUGHES - G. Paul on 13th December aged 46. Beloved husband of Jackie and proud father of Alexandra. Much loved by mother, father, Lizi and Sarah. Sadly missed by all his friends around the world. Funeral Service St Peters, Walton-on-the-Hill, at 2pm on December 17th. No flowers please. Memorial Donations to The Melanoma Research Fund, Royal Marsden Hospital, Fulham.

HUNEEUS - Betty (Betina) peacefully, after an illness courageously borne. Beloved mother of Angela and Richard and sister of Doris, David and Godfrey. Private cremation. No flowers please, but if desired donations to St. Wilfrids Hospice, Grosvenor Road, Chichester, W. Sussex. PO19 2FP.

IRWIN - Anthony Stuart MC (Tony) on December 13th peacefully after a long illness. Much loved by all his family and friends. Funeral at St Helen's Barrick Saloon, Otton, 10:30, 21st December.

KNOLOCH SMYTH - Georgette, suddenly at home on 11th December 1998. Much loved sister of Louise and Anne, dearly loved aunt and great-aunt. Requiem Mass at St. Stephen's RC Church, Blairgowrie, at 10.00am, Thursday 17th December. Thereafter, burial private. R.I.P. No flowers, or letters please.

LEIGH - Piers Egerton, brother of the late Sir Neville Leigh, died on Wednesday, 9th December 1998, in his 81st year.

LENANTON - William Robert, died suddenly on Saturday 12th December aged 59 years. Funeral Service at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead, on Monday 21st December at 2.30pm. Family flowers only, donations to the British Heart Foundation. Enquiries to Means and Cotterill, 169 Merton Road, SW18 5EF. Tel:0181 8747698.

ROUVE - Pierre Christov Ouvaliev. Peacefully on December 11th 1998, aged 83. Much loved husband, father and uncle. Orthodox Ritual and Cremation at Mortlake on Monday 21st December, 12 noon. Enquiries, flowers or donations to HH Kenyon, Tel: 0171 987 0737.

STURGES - Rachel Sybil (née Borthwick) wife of the late Peter Sturgis. Peacefully in Malmesbury Hospital after a short illness. Cremation private. Memorial service 5th January 3.00 pm at Dunnhey.

WALTON - Alan, husband of Bagueta (dec'd), died on 11th December 1998. Private cremation. Donations if desired to the Parkinsons Disease Society, c/o H C Patrick and Co, 80 East Street, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7TP.

WEST - Robert Dudley late the Lancashire Fusiliers and husband of the late Elizabeth Anne West suddenly at home on 12th December 1998. The funeral to be held at St Mary's Church, Ashby Folville, near Melton Mowbray on 19th December 1998 at noon. No flowers please, but donations if desired to MacMillan Cancer Relief, c/o Glinn & Gatheridge, 51 Vaughan Way, Leicester.

WOOD - Winifred Sylvia died peacefully on Sunday December 13th aged 91. Funeral at Pendeford Church, 11.00am, Monday 21st December. Donations to Red Cross please.

WORSFOLD - Peter Christopher Mowry. On 11th December 1998, at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. Funeral strictly private. No flowers by request. Enquiries to Moon Beever Solicitors, 24-25 Bloomsbury Square, London. WC1A 2PL.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

BETTS - In memory of my beloved husband Lt. Col. Frank Betts MBE, Coldstream Guards, 18th December 1985. Miss you always, love Jane.

CARTER - Eileen (Doodles). On the 6th Anniversary of her death, still much loved and respected.

PHILIPS - Alfred "Al", 18th December 1998, my beloved husband. Today and everyday, ever in my thoughts and always in my heart. Val.

PIGGOTT - Charles Antony Piggott M.A., Ph.D. Remembered, a brilliant and gifted young man: Kelvinside Academy, Edinburgh University, The City of London.

PIGGOTT - Dr Charles Antony Piggott. Love unchanging. Marjorie, Reginald and Mary-Anne.

WATTS - Joan. Always and especially loved. Avery.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

GOODMAN : SAINT - On 16th December 1948 at The Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue, Lauderdale Road, London. Cyril Joshua Goodman to Ruth Sabel. Address: Eldonwyn, Crockham, near Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex.

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OBITUARIES

ADRIAN RYAN

Adrian Ryan, painter, writer and art teacher, died yesterday aged 78. He was born on October 3, 1920.

To artist friends such as Francis Bacon, Keith Baynes, Dod Proctor and John Minton, Adrian Ryan always seemed a well-kept secret of the art world. This was despite having his handsome features recorded for *Vogue* and his paintings selling from Tooth's to the rich glitterati of the 1940s. Few of those early pictures, much praised by the young critic Patrick Heron, have since been dispersed, and Adrian Ryan's reputation has, as a consequence, remained private, too.

His upbringing set him apart. Adrian James Ryan was brought up at Hintlesham Hall, Suffolk, the grandson of Sir Gerald Ryan, and at Cagnes-sur-Mer, where the family owned Villa Santa Lucia. His father was the painter Vivian Ryan, whom he described as being lovely, "just like something out of Scott Fitzgerald". His mother Kitty, a watercolourist, was a member of the Downing family. She ignored her husband's infidelities but kept aloof from her young son.

Ryan grew up with the smell of paint in a relaxed environment of attics and armour, salons and snooker, of which he later wrote a memoir, *Some Recollections of Hintlesham*. He was educated at Eton, the Architectural Association and the Slade. Alternative tutelage came from his beloved godfather, Sir William ("Sounding") Brass, MP, later Lord Chatisham, who gave him such treats as visiting a Moroccan brothel and — in his capacity as parliamentary private secretary to Neville Chamberlain — arranging for him to meet the then Prime Minister on his official return from Germany ("waving that bit of paper", as Ryan was later wryly to recall). He also taught him to be a fine shot.

Private means provided him with a Tite Street flat and studio, where he met Augustus John, whom he cheekily — and to the old man's delight — called Gussie. Matthew Smith was also a resident, and between them they spawned a distinguished series of artistic friendships.

After his grandfather's death Ryan began acquiring pictures. The pioneering Storran Gallery, run by Eardley Knollys, sold him works by Utrillo, Soutine, Picasso, Modigliani and Bonnard. Meanwhile Rex Nan-Kivell gave him successive one-man shows at the old Redfern Gallery from 1943. Edward Le Bas was the first collector to buy one of his works, a fine picture of a crayfish. From Rex, Ryan himself bought works by Christopher Wood and Pascin.



Ryan, seen in a self-portrait: figurative painting was his business and in Cornwall, where he settled, he continued to record the details of its harbours and its people

In 1945 Ryan headed for Cornwall. He retained his London studio and later a Paris one, but from Seagulls Cottage, Mousehole, and later from Old Hill Cottage, Love Lane, overlooking the grey slates of the village below, he found expression away from the influence of the London galleries and through studying nature more closely.

The *peintre maudit* evolved into something more suited to his Libran temperament. The bar-room of the Ship Inn — known as the House of Commons — became his haunt in place of Muriel Belcher's Colony Room. Incorporated with the nearby St Ives Group, he was especially friendly with Sven Berlin. He was briefly president of the Newlyn painters, but after repeatedly adjourning their meetings to the less boring environment of the pub he was asked to step down, and graciously acceded.

His shows at the Redfern were popular, and although high society attended them, he neither sought nor gained its full recognition. He was essentially too shy and unsnobbish to fit in. In 1947 he was proposed for election as an RA, but when nothing was done about it, he did not pursue the question. He was habitually self-deprecating, for what others would regard merely as good salesmanship he tended to regard as cheap or ungentlemanly.

When abstraction infected Cornwall, he was not impressed. Figurative painting was his business, and he simply continued with poetic observations of harbours, still lifes — especially of fish — French farmhouses and Paris streets, wondering if the public might catch up with him again. (It began to, in 1994, when the National Trust gave him a London retrospective.)

An obligation to rescue his brother's failed finances cost Ryan his fortune, and his valuable paintings had to be sold one by one. In 1948 he began teaching at Goldsmiths' College, taking over from his friend Graham Sutherland, and then (additionally) at the Cambridge College of Art. His teaching method was strictly one-to-one. He retired in 1983, relieved to have avoided giving a public lecture for 35 years.

A softly-spoken intellectual who enjoyed cowboy movies, cricket, and Laurel and Hardy, he was a gifted communicator whose writing skills especially were under-fulfilled. He published a book about still-life painting and was a prolific correspondent. His dexterity with language was strongly evident in conversation, with immense humour and charm earning him an enduring variety of friendships and lovers.

He married three times and had three daughters. They all survive him.

HIS HONOUR LEO CLARK

His Honour Leo Clark, QC, former circuit judge, died on December 5 aged 77. He was born on December 15, 1920.

AFTER almost 30 years at the Bar, both as a junior and in silk, Leo Clark was appointed a circuit judge in 1976, and became the designated judge at the Oxford Combined Courts Centre and the liaison judge with the magistracy from 1985 until his retirement from the circuit bench in 1993. Thereafter he continued to sit as a deputy judge until he was 75. He was also Honorary Recorder of the City of Oxford from 1989.

Francis Leo Clark was born in Leamington Spa, the only son of Sydney John and Florence Lillian Clark. He was educated at Bablake School in Coventry. When he was a young man, the family moved to Oxford. Thereafter he spent most of his life living and working in Oxford and Oxfordshire, and it was there that his heart most certainly lay. He read PPE at St Peter's Hall, graduating in 1942.

Being both discreet and reticent, he rarely talked about what he did in the war. So few who knew him later in his life were aware that when he left Oxford he was "head-hunted" to work at Bletchley Park, and joined the remarkable team which succeeded in cracking the German code, Enigma.

Then, until 1945, he was responsible for processing and correlating the incoming enemy signals for decoding. Even fewer of his later acquaintances knew how crucial his contribution had been. His logical and analytical mind, together with his linguistic skills, well suited him to this demanding work.

After the war he read for the Bar, and was called by Lincoln's Inn in 1947. He joined the old Oxford circuit, and soon built up a thriving practice, both in criminal and civil cases, most frequently appearing in Reading and Oxford, where he tried many demanding and substantial cases both criminal and civil.



Clark: robust and firm as judges should be

On the bench he was robust and firm as every judge should be. He was quick to spot the real point at issue, and never sought to avoid any difficulty. It was a measure of his quality that he was very rarely appealed, and scarcely any appeal from him was successful. Nor did he ever attract adverse publicity, because he always set an admirable example of reticence on the bench and because he weighed his words conscientiously.

With the help of the then Chief Clerk of the Oxford courts, he was largely responsible for the layout of the present court building in Oxford — a task that required imagination and foresight. It was his organisational ability, too, that guided the move of the Oxford Crown and the County Courts into a combined Courts Centre.

In 1990 he sustained a cardiac arrythmia and subsequent cerebral embolus, from which, by fortitude and determination, he made so complete a recovery, under the care of his second wife, Daphne, that he was able to return to the bench.

In private life he was somewhat shy and reserved. He had a nice sense of humour, but was never uncharitable. His manners had a charming old-fashioned courtesy.

His first marriage ended in divorce, but in his second wife, whom he married in 1967, he found the perfect partner for 30 years. Together they frequently attended the opera (his special enthusiasm), the theatre and concerts (in which she often performed).

He is survived by his wife, and by a son from his first marriage.

ROY BURROWES

Roy Burrowes, jazz trumpeter, died in London on December 2 aged 72. He was born in Jamaica on February 18, 1926.

IN THE 1960s Roy Burrowes spent just over a year in the trumpet section of the Duke Ellington Orchestra, the pinnacle of achievement for any jazz musician, especially for a Jamaican immigrant to the US who had worked his way up from obscurity after arriving in the country some ten years before.

He went on to work with many of the great names in jazz and blues, including Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin, and for the last eight years of his life he lived largely in London, where he and his wife, Sandra Noble, established International Jazz Day. Burrowes also contributed as a musician and raconteur to numerous Ellington memorial events, as one of the dwindling group of survivors of the famous band, and at the time of his death he was due to fly to Florida for yet another Ellington convention.

Roy Burrowes grew up in Kingston, Jamaica, living with his parents in a sprawling house that also contained several aunts and uncles, their nine children plus his own two brothers and a sister. He saw little of his father, who was a merchant seaman, but it was his gift of a trumpet during a period of shore leave that got the young Roy started as a musician.

He had already developed a fascination with music, and became something of an unofficial mascot for the band of the West Indian Regiment, which was quartered close to the family home. He was encouraged to try out some of their instruments in return for polishing buttons and brassware, and once he had decided to become a trumpeter he took lessons from Sergeant William Maclean, one of the bandmasters.

By 14 he was playing dances in the neighbouring parish, and working regularly in the small bandstands that stood at street corners in the gambling district of Kingston. He was leading his own band by the time he was 18, and became quite a star at the Gaiety Theatre in Kingston, playing a mixture of swing, calypso and rhythm-and-blues.

All this, however, was little use when he moved to America in the late 1940s and settled with members of his extended family in the Bronx, eventually taking American citizenship. He then had to establish a new reputation in the most competitive jazz environment in the world. To do this, he joined forces with a group of up-and-coming players including the trumpeter Benny Harris, a colleague of Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker, who introduced him to the burgeoning after-hours jam session scene.

He was also befriended by several other New York jazz musicians of Caribbean origin, including Sonny Rollins, and by the swing tenorist Big Nick Nicholas, whom he met at a jam session at the Paradise Club, and who helped to start his American career.

In due course, Burrowes made a name for himself as a dependable big band player, able quickly to sight-read new music, and as a competent soloist in a style that leaned towards bebop. His moment of glory came in March 1962, when he replaced Cat Anderson on an Ellington recording session, and almost immediately set off on a tour of the Midwest. It was the start of just over a year of incessant touring and recording.

In that time Burrowes contributed to a dozen albums and visited every major country in Europe. He left in April 1963, when Rolf Ericson replaced him. Over the years that followed, he played in the big bands of Ray Charles, Sun Ra, Randy Weston and Archie Shepp, as well as making small group jazz with Shepp and the pianist Cedar Walton, both of whom recorded his composition *Down in Brazil*.

Burrowes was a skilled arranger and received a National Endowment for the Arts commission for his extended suite *West Indian African American*.

In the early 1980s he worked in Paris, recording with pianist Mal Waldron, as well as with Abbey Lincoln, whose song *I Know Why a Caged Bird Sings* from her *Painted Lady* album with Burrowes and Shepp is widely regarded as a masterpiece.

He subsequently settled in London, where he played frequently at the Pizza Express in Dean Street in the early 1990s. He is survived by his wife and daughter.



From Rum Lane in Kingston, Jamaica, Burrowes went on to play with Duke Ellington

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

UNMELODIOUS BIRDSONG

Though Indian birds are more glorious in plumage than the English, they are generally inferior in song. To the exile returning home in the spring nothing seems so unfamiliar, so noticeable, as the song of the thrushes and blackbirds, the linnets, chaffinches, and yellow hammers. Every wood and hedge is vocal. In the plains of India, perhaps because trees are scarcer, the haunts of song are fewer. Towards sunset, when the mynahs and sparrows come to roost in their thousands, the noise is deafening; each bird seems bent on drowning his neighbour's talk. Five minutes after sundown perfect stillness reigns, and every bird is asleep, or else "talked out". The birds whose call may be heard throughout the day are not as a whole melodious. You may drive for miles and hardly hear a note except the partridge's call, the harsh caw of the crow, the ceaseless "chatter, chatter, chatter" of the "seven sister" babblers, the complaining "did-ye-do-it, did-ye-do-it" of the red-wattled lapwing, or the strident 'tshow, tshow" of the Indian roller. If the grey shrike meet you he will make a saw-like noise quite appropriate to his trade as butcher-bird.

The cuckoos, too, of the plains are an unmusical family. The "wandering voice" of the English cuckoo is heard in the Himalayas in the spring, but he never visited the plains of Rohtak. There are four birds there of his family, though none of his genus. The crow-pheasant or coucal is the largest of them. His note suggests water being poured into a narrow-necked bottle. The other three are the common hawk cuckoo, the Koel, and the pied-crested cuckoo. Of these three the last is popularly supposed to have a hole in its neck through which alone it can drink. All three cuckoos have harsh and ugly calls. The hawk cuckoo has well earned the name of the "brain-fever bird", his shrill crescendo, rising up the scale through the hot day, is exasperating.

The Koel contents himself with a monotonous "ku-il" ku'il, ku'il" repeated in ever louder tones. Yet this is the bird which the Indian regards as the prince of songsters and to whose note the poet compares his mistress's voice! Another unmusical bird is the peacock, which, being a sacred fowl, overruns the Hindu villages and is allowed free licence to pilfer. His voice is even more deplorable than his ungainly legs: and he either sits up all night or talks in his sleep, for at any hour one may be awakened by his discordant "pi-hu, pi-hu".

ON THIS DAY

December 16, 1911

With Parliament in recess and little news from abroad at the approach of Christmas, there was room for a 2,700-word article, from which this extract is taken. The author noted 297 species in a northern Indian state the size of Hampshire.

THE TIMES TODAY WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 16 1998

NEWS

Kelly quits FA over £3.2m loan

The chief executive of the Football Association resigned last night after he and the chairman were accused of offering a £3.2 million sweetener to secure support for England's bid for the 2006 World Cup.

Graham Kelly quit his £200,000-a-year job after a decade in the post, but Keith Wiseman, the chairman, refused to resign in spite of a unanimous vote of no confidence.....Page 1

Incentives offer for private pensions

The state earnings related pension will be scrapped and big incentives offered to middle income earners to persuade them to take out private pensions, under reforms unveiled yesterday. Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary announced that the government would provide extra help for those earning less than £9,000 by setting up a second state pension.....Page 1

Clinton support fails

Bill Clinton faced the darkest hours of his presidency last night as the first cracks appeared in his public support and moderate Republicans refused to help him to fight off impeachment.....Page 1

Jury serenaded

Andrew Lloyd Webber serenaded a New York jury on a courtroom piano to refute allegations that he stole a struggling songwriter's melody for the theme tune of *The Phantom of the Opera*.....Page 1

Ekland's theft drama

The villains in Britt Ekland's old films were usually easy to spot. Yesterday she was accused of confusing a real-life crook with a shopper in the fruit section of her local supermarket.....Page 3

Barrantes memorial

It was not so much a memorial service, more a thanksgiving for a rollercoaster life. Susan Barrantes, the mother of the Duchess of York who died in a road accident near her Argentinian ranch in September aged 61, did not live by halves.....Page 5

Entwined in the Net

Nearly half all regular Internet users admit that they are addicted, spending an average of 60 hours a week in cyberspace. New research shows that even regular Internet users who do not consider themselves to be addicted spend 28 hours a week on-line....Page 6

Monet marquee fight

An historic London courtyard normally dedicated to the arts and academia rang with outrage yesterday as neighbours went to war. The cause of all the bad feeling is a massive white marquee erected for the Monet exhibition next month.....Page 8

Kosovo ambush

British monitors in Kosovo were turned back from sensitive zones on the border with Albania as Yugoslav Army and Serb police units continued a mopping-up operation against guerrillas who escaped an ambush that killed 31 of their colleagues.....Page 12

Middle East failure

President Clinton ended a testing three-day Middle East peace mission with no breakthrough in rescuing the land-for-security peace deal.....Page 13

Mafia exhumation

On the orders of a Rome judge, Italian police will today exhume the body of Roberto Calvi, the Mafia-linked financier found hanging under Blackfriars Bridge in London 16 years ago.....Page 14

Iranians irate

A backlash by Iranian moderates over the murder of several dissidents spilled on to the streets of Tehran when more than 1,000 university students called for the dismissal of the country's chief judge and security heads.....Page 15

Cricket prowess is mind over batter

Players with a positive mental attitude who walk tall and swing the bat confidently score more runs than those who are depressed and walk with shoulders hunched, a study has shown. A survey of 33 county cricketers revealed that results were most profound among batsmen, whose batting averages improved up to 16 per cent if they were in a good mood.....Page 6

PETER NICHOLLS



Derek Deane and Alice Crawford rehearse for the English National Ballet's season of *The Nutcracker* at the London Coliseum

BUSINESS

Undersold: The National Audit Office said that Railtrack, floated on the stockmarket two years ago, was sold by the Government £1.5 billion too cheaply.....Page 23

Sears saga: The retail group Sears has received a £460 million takeover bid pitching Norman Tebbit against his merchant banker son William.....Page 23

Flat prices: The Retail Price Index revealed that underlying inflation for November came in at 2.5 per cent, the fourth consecutive month at that figure.....Page 23

Markets: The FTSE 100 index was up 22.6 points at 5557.1. The pound was off a third of a cent at $1.6835 and similarly off a third of pfennig at DM2.7929. The sterling index rose 0.2 to 100.7.....Page 26

Football: Graham Kelly, the chief executive of the Football Association, has resigned over proposed unsanctioned payments to the Welsh Football Association....Pages 44, 42

Football: The destiny of the FA Carling Premiership title could become clearer after the heavyweight meeting between Manchester United and Chelsea tonight.....Page 41

Cricket: Australian commentators have questioned England's right to have a five Test series in the country after their abject failure in the Ashes series.....Page 40

Olympic Games: A key member of the Manchester bid for the Olympic Games has revealed that members of the International Cricket Committee touted for money on visits to the city.....Page 41

Risen stars: In the past five years some 250 young contenders across the arts spectrum have featured in our weekly Great British Hopes column. So who has gone on to be rich and famous.....Page 31

King Kissin: The pianist Evgeny Kissin is well known for his showy performances, but for Chopin at the Wigmore Hall he showed that he can be intimate too.....Page 32

Dream on: Colin Davis brought his Elgar series with the London Symphony Orchestra to a stirring climax at the Barbican with a spiritual *Dream of Gerontius*.....Page 32

Fresh prince: Will Smith can do no wrong — he has moved seamlessly from rapper to Hollywood star, and now apparently has his sights on the White House.....Page 33

Seconds out: On December 31, the world's most accurate clocks will tick on an extra second.....Page 16

Bug busters: Nigel Hawkes reports on a way to beat bacteria that could replace antibiotics; on a new purple "jewel".....Page 16

Joanna Coles: New York mums-to-be and their partners munch popcorn while watching videos about childbirth.....Page 17

Granted: Twenty years ago, Jackie Grant was rejected for membership of the Institute of Qualified Private Secretaries. Now she runs the organisation.....Page 35

Over the shop: Outside cities, the local shop is becoming a thing of the past.....Page 36

Nifty Fifties: All that concrete and functionalism . . . Fifties architecture can seem daunting.....Page 37

President Clinton is a manipulator of the truth who has spent much of his career in the gray zones of American politics. It is not just a no-man's land between the parties and their philosophies that he seeks to occupy. Time and again, his self-protective instincts have led him across the line between principle and deviousness and the line between truth and falsehood as well.
The Washington Post



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

■ **FILMS**
Animation enlivens Christmas in *The Prince of Egypt*, the Dreamworks film with the voices of Hollywood stars

■ **BOOKS**
Erica Wagner hails the mischief-making John Updike

Preview: The rise of a heart throb, *Leonardo DiCaprio* (Channel 5, 9pm) **Review:** Joe Joseph on a marriage under fire.....Pages 42, 43

Thinking long term

Most of these measures assume levels of rationality and understanding that often elude people when it comes to the future.....Page 19

Murder in Iran

What frightens the religious leadership is the swelling public support for the modernisers.....Page 19

Nobel causes

The spirit of noblesse, or even bourgeois, oblige is something to be celebrated, especially when it springs up in Guatemala's unforgiving soil rather than our own more ordered pastures.....Page 19

PETER RIDDELL

The long-awaited pensions statement is typical of this Government: well-intentioned, worthwhile, but not as radical as the advance billing. Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary, is the epitome of the Blairite minister, non-ideological and pragmatic.....Page 11

SIMON JENKINS

I prefer to read Mr Prescott's law. What that clearly says, in Schedule 13 to sections 200 and 201, is that a mayor can propose what he likes, but the Secretary of State will decide.....Page 18

BRONWEN MADDOX

Mr. Gore might feel overtaken by personal grief. Yet in this week of rising drama, irresistible to most of the political class, he has been afflicted more than ever by his legendary woodenness.....Page 18

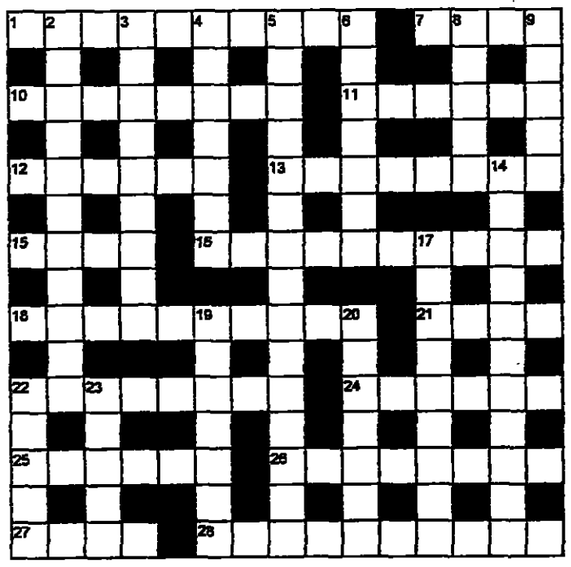
ALAN COREN

As the Alka-Seltzer fizzed, I raised it to absent batting. For if it had not been so absent, I myself might have not survived five Tests.....Page 18

Adrian Ryan, artist; Roy Burrows, jazz trumpeter; His Honour Leo Clark.....Page 21

Future of Europe's defence industries; ethics of cloning human cells; class sizes and quality of teaching; Pinochet's appeal; Pope's grotto; millennium Christmas card; Test defeat.....Page 19

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,976



ACROSS

1 Composer very into melodies with keys oddly used (10).
7 Sound beating repeatedly delivered by karate chop (4).
10 Many small vessels left all of it at sea (8).
11 People welcoming popular foreign dramatist (6).
12 Jack's coat that's laid down to cover road (6).
13 Pop article found in French daily (8).
15 This philosopher is talking jargon (4).
16 Applied know-how to find the only cog that needs replacing (10).
18 Jeans, for example, or one smart ensemble (10).
21 Poor article has no conclusion (4).
22 Brew made with rare type of rum (8).
24 Excited of late, being in such a state before one's birthday (6).
25 Gum Mum used, with glue in short supply (6).
26 Give encouragement without being physically present (8).
27 Timeless toy repeatedly making a comeback (2-2).
28 Oriental expert alone comprehends one new point (10).

DOWN

2 In capital city, high Anglican, initially, is bishop? (11).
3 What gives one's height and age in turn (9).
4 Extract reportedly found under the counter (7).
5 Fellow-member board included in second handbook (6,9).
6 London copper - one working on trains? (7).
8 Country familiar to a Cockney (5).
9 Plant found in neat study (2-3).
14 In personal records, head of government can upset VIPs (11).
17 Characters smirking about diminutive island race (9).
19 Bothers, after one's dropped out, to get fine degrees? (7).
20 No problem for a showjumper (7).
22 Model partner putting cards on the table (5).
23 Obscure film introducing unknown (5).

Times Two Crossword, page 44

Solution to Puzzle No 20,975

C	A	P	E	R	C	A	I	L	L	I	E			
O		E		E		R		I		D		R		S
R	U	N	I	N		C	O	N	D	I	M	E	N	T
S		N		O		H		G		O		L		A
A	S	Y	O	U	W	E	R	E		T	R	A	C	T
I			N		R			R			T		U	
R	E	L	I	C	S		M	I	S	P	R	I	Z	E
		E		E		S		E		A		N		
P	L	A	U	D	I	T	S		O	N	A	G	E	R
U		R			R		B		E			O		
F	I	N	I	S		A	N	A	L	G	E	S	I	A
F		I		T		P	R	Y		P		D		
I	N	N	K	E	E	P	E	R		R	E	A	L	M
N		G		E		E		I		H		A		
			P	R	E	D	I	L	E	C	T	I	O	N

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 8.00 am — Sun sets: 3.52 pm

Moon sets: 5.09 pm — Moon rises: 2.51 am

Last Quarter, New Moon December 18

London 3.52 pm to 8.00 am
Bristol 4.01 pm to 8.11 am
Edinburgh 3.38 pm to 8.09 am
Manchester 3.49 pm to 8.20 am
Penzance 4.20 pm to 8.15 am

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up of 4% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the year to end 1997

Weather

☐ **General:** Scotland will be very windy with gales in the North and West where there will be rain, some of it heavy. However, it will be mild and most places will stay dry with some sunshine breaking through. Winds will touch gale force across Northern Ireland and there will be a lot of cloud with some patchy drizzle breaking out. Wales and much of northern and western England will be windy, but dry with a few sunny periods. The rest of England will be less windy with some good sunny spells. Tonight will remain rather windy in the North and West. Rain in northwest Scotland will spread to most of Scotland and Northern Ireland. England and Wales will be dry and mild with clear periods.

☐ **London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, W Midlands, Channel Islands:** mild and dry with sunny spells. A light south to southwesterly wind. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **E England, NE England:** breezy but dry with sunny spells. A fresh southwesterly wind. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N:** remaining dry, some sunshine. Wind S, fresh to strong. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth:** mild and mostly dry with sunny spells. A strong south to southwesterly wind. Max 12C (54F).

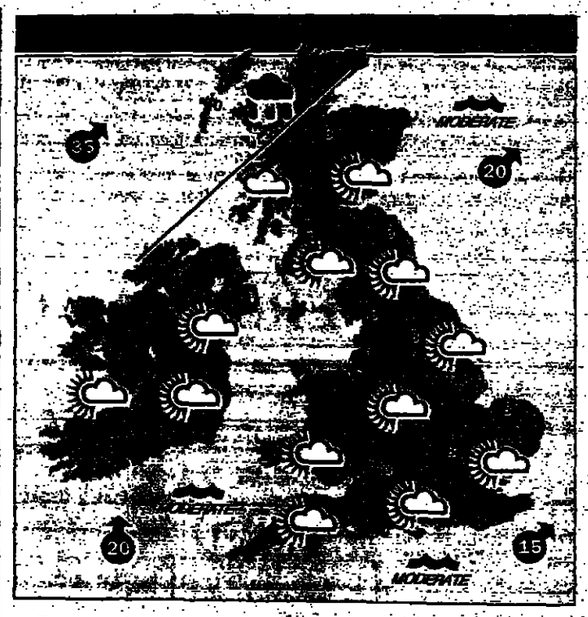
☐ **SW Scotland, Glasgow:** strong winds and patchy drizzle, but mild. A strong southerly wind. Max 12C (54F).

☐ **Central Highlands, NE Scotland, Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** very windy with spells of rain, some heavy. A strong to gale force southerly wind. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **N Ireland:** very windy and rather cloudy with drizzle to north and west but mild. Max 13C (55F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** mainly dry with variable but increasing cloud. Some weak sunny periods. Spots of drizzle in west later. Wind south fresh or strong. Max 11C (52F).

☐ **Outlook:** Thursday will see a band of rain spreading south-eastwards across the country, clearing to leave showers in the North and West. Overall, temperatures will stay above average for the time of year. However, a further spell of rain is likely in the North and West on Friday.



Changes to chart below from noon: Low H will move NE. High A is expected to drift E. Low U will persist over eastern Mediterranean.



24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dust; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max F	Max C	
Aberdeen	5.0	-	9	48	s	Kinloss	1.3	0.18	48	9	s
Anglesey	1.1	0.02	10	50	s	Leeds	-	0.03	48	9	r
Aspatria	0.8	0.01	8	46	s	Lerwick	0.2	0.08	46	8	r
Aviemore	0.1	0.44	6	43	s	Lincolnshire	3.6	0.01	48	9	s
Belfast	3.5	0.07	9	48	s	Littlehampton	-	0.09	52	11	s
Birmingham	-	0.41	10	50	r	London	-	0.22	53	12	s
Bognor R	-	0.06	11	52	r	Manchester	-	0.55	48	9	sh
Bournemth	-	0.36	12	54	r	Margate	-	0.03	53	12	s
Bristol	-	0.34	12	54	r	Morecombe	-	0.61	48	9	sh
Buxton	-	0.36	7	45	s	Newcastle	0.1	0.01	48	9	sh
Cardiff	-	0.34	12	54	r	Norwich	-	0.09	52	11	s
Clacton	-	0.35	11	52	s	Oxford	-	0.10	52	11	s
Cleethorpes	-	0.14	9	48	s	Penzance	-	0.23	53	12	s
Cromer	-	0.11	10	50	s	Prestatyn	0.2	0.07	50	10	s
Eastbourne	-	0.04	9	48	s	Ross on Wye	-	0.03	51	11	r
Edinburgh	3.0	0.01	8	46	s	Scarton Sands	-	0.03	51	11	sh
Eskdalemuir	1.1	-	6	43	s	Scarborough	-	0.01	48	9	s
Exmouth	-	0.56	12	54	r	Shrewsbury	-	0.17	50	10	r
Fishguard	-	0.26	10	50	r	Skegness	-	0.08	50	10	s
Folkestone	-	0.04	9	48	s	Southend	-	-	54	12	s
Glasgow	3.2	0.01	8	46	s	Southport	X	0.04	48	9	s
Guernsey	-	0.06	11	52	r	Stornoway	1.5	0.26	47	8	s
Hastings	-	0.01	11	52	s	Swanage	-	0.30	52	11	s
Hayling I.	-	0.27	11	52	r	Tenmouth	-	0.09	53	12	s
Herne Bay	-	0.26	13	55	s	Tenby	0.5	0.04	51	11	s
Hove	-	0.09	11	52	s	Tiree	1.8	0.03	49	9	s
Hunstanton	-	0.20	10	50	r	Torquay	-	0.12	54	12	s
Isle of Man	0.9	-	9	48	s	Tynemouth	-	0.01	49	9	s
Isle of Wight	X	-	12	54	s	Weymouth	-	0.15	52	11	s
Jersey	-	0.24	12	54	s						

Ajaccio	12	54	s	Cologne	8	46	c	Madrid	11	52	s
Alicante	18	66	s	Cyprus	24	75	s	Majorca	18	64	s
Alexdria	19	66	c	Corfu	13	55	r	Malaga	19	66	s
Algiers	19	66	s	Dublin	14	57	r	Malta	16	61	s
Amsterdm	12	54	s	Dubrovnik	11	52	r	Melbourne	18	64	c
Athens	13	55	c	Faro	19	66	s	Mexico C	16	50	r
Bahrain	24	75	r	Florence	5	41	fg	Miami	22	72	s
Bangkok	29	84	s	Frankfurt	8	46	c	Milan	5	41	fg
Barbados	29	84	r	Funchal	21	70	s	Moscow	-15	5	sn
Barcelona	14	57	r	Geneva	7	45	r	Munich	7	45	r
Beijing	9	48	s	Gibraltar	17	63	s	Nairobi	28	82	f
Beirut	18	64	s	Helsinki	-1	30	sn	Naples	14	57	c
Belgrade	3	37	r	Hong K	13	55	c	N Delhi	19	66	s
Berlin	6	43	r	Innsbruck	1	34	r	N York	5	41	s
Bermuda	24	75	r	Istanbul	9	48	s	Nice	9	48	r
Biarritz	17	63	s	Jeddah	31	88	s	Oslo	-6	21	c
Bordeaux	9	48	c	Joburg	24	75	r	Paris	10	50	c
Brussels	11	52	c	L Palmas	24	75	s	Perth	38	100	s
Budapest	1	34	s	Le Touet	13	55	r	Prague	4	39	r
B Aires	29	84	r	Lisbon	15	59	s	Reykjavik	-1	30	c
Cairo	13	55	r	Locarno	6	43	s	Rhodes	15	63	s
Cape Tn	26	79	c	L Angeles	14	57	s	Rio de J	28	82	f
Chicago	8	46	c	Luxemby	7	45	r	Riyadh	33	91	s
Christchurch	X	-	-	Lyon	25	77	s	Roma	12	54	r

Salzburg	2	36	r	Stockholm	-2	28	sn	Vienna	4	39	r
S Frisco	11	52	s	Sydney	22	72	r	Warsaw	0	32	sn
Santiago	28	82	s	Tangier	20	68	s	Washton	7	45	s
S Paulo	X	-	-	Tel Aviv	19	66	f	Wellington	17	63	s
Seoul	X	-	-	Tenerife	23	73	s	Zurich	8	46	c
Singapore	30	86	r	Tokyo	14	57	s				
Stockholm	4	39	c	Toronto	2	36	s				
Strasbrg	10	50	r	Tunis	18	64	r				
Sydney	22	72	r	Valencia	17	63	s				
Tangier	20	68	s	Vancver	4	39	r				
Tel Aviv	19	66	f	Venice	5	41	s				

Temperatures at midday (noon time on Monday). X = not available

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	11:03	4.0	-	-	Liverpool	9:33	8.5	9:51	8.5
Avonmouth	5:21	15.6	5:40	11.8	London Bridge	-	-	12:19	5.5
Belfast	0:24	3.2	12:34	3.3	Lowestoft	7:41	2.3	8:23	2.4
Cardiff	5:07	10.8	5:28	11.0	Margate	10:19	4.4	10:45	4.5
Devonport	3:51	6.1	4:08	6.1	Milford Haven	4:27	6.1	4:45	6.2
Dover	9:24	6.1	9:48	6.1	Newquay	3:22	6.1	3:39	6.2
Dublin	10:02	3.6	10:20	3.7	Oban	4:11	3.5	4:15	3.6
Falmouth	4:33	4.9	4:37	4.9	Penzance	2:54	5.0	3:12	5.0
Greenock	11:10	3.3	11:09	3.1	Portland	4:54	1.7	5:06	1.7
Harwich	10:04	3.6	10:28	3.7	Portsmouth	9:45	4.4	10:06	4.3
Holyhead	8:47	5.1	9:03	5.1	Shoreham	9:24	6.8	9:57	6.6
Hull (Albert D)	4:33	7.6	4:57	7.8	Southampton	0:00	4.3	0:28	4.2
Ilfracombe	4:12	8.1	4:30	8.2	Swansea	4:58	8.4	4:49	8.5
Kings Lynn	8:35	5.6	8:52	6.0	Tees	1:45	4.9	2:13	5.0
Leith	0:50	4.9	1:08	5.0	Walton-On-Naze	10:00	3.8	10:25	3.9

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

Yesterday: highest day temp: Guernsey, 14C (57F); lowest day max: Shap Fell, Cumbria, 6C (43F); highest rainfall: Loch Glascarnoch, Highland, 0.67in; highest sunshine: Aberdeen 5.0hrs.

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هكذا من الأصل

THE TIMES 2

DIEU ET MON DROIT

INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY

COUNTDOWN TO EMU

BUSINESS
Portugal prepares to harvest benefits of monetary union
PAGE 27



ARTS
What do these three have in common with 250 others?
PAGES 31-33



HOMES
The local shop lives . . . but below your flat?
PAGES 36, 37

TELEVISION AND RADIO
Pages 42, 43

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft — WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 16 1998

Audit Office criticises sell-off

Railtrack's float cost public £1.5bn

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

TAXPAYERS lost up to £1.5 billion through the rushed privatisation of Railtrack, according to a critical official investigation into the sell-off.

A long-delayed report into the sale of Railtrack concluded that proceeds from the sale could almost have doubled if the Tory Government had retained a substantial stake. Ministers were told yesterday by the National Audit Office to base future flotations rather than stage "big bang" sell-offs.

The report into the sale of Railtrack, the track and signalling firm, issued a warning against allowing financial advisers to manage the sale of shares. The official investigation also concluded that the sale should have been delayed by several months to allow better understanding of the rail business.

Railtrack was sold for £1.9 billion in 1996 amid fears that a future Labour government might reverse the railway privatisation. Government officials decided that the sale should be completed in one stage, leading to a flotation that was ten times oversubscribed among international institutional investors.

The NAO report questioned the wisdom of the single-sale approach, and calculated that much higher sums could have been achieved through a gradual sale over several years. It said future sell-offs should be planned on the assumption of a phased flotation.

The report also cast doubt on ministers' decision to reduce Railtrack's debt because of the Thameslink 2000 track improvement project around London. It said that some £125 million was lost to the taxpayer through a move that investors rated as unnecessary.

David Davis, a former Tory minister and now chairman of the Commons Public Accounts Committee, suggested that more stringent guidelines be imposed to achieve better value from future sell-offs. Ministers have unveiled plans to sell stakes in the Royal Mint, the Tote, National Air Traffic Services and Commonwealth Development Corporation.

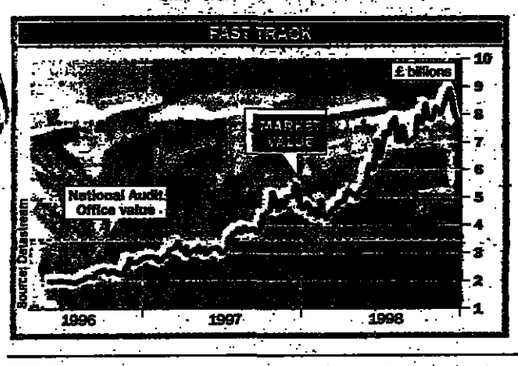
The NAO report discloses that SBC Warburg, which advised the Government and coordinated the sale, earned almost 25 per cent more than it originally estimated. Projected fees of £8.6 million rose to £10.9 million.

The report says that using one company to advise and organise the sale created the risk of a conflict of interest. It said that, although there was no evidence of a conflict of interest, government officials relied heavily on SBC Warburg information when deciding to allow one company to take on two roles.

The value of Railtrack shares have increased more than four-fold from the original £3.90 price. The year-long NAO investigation concluded that, if the Conservative Government had retained 40 per cent of Railtrack shares, proceeds might have increased by £1.5 billion.

The report also said that a better price might have been achieved by delaying the flotation from May 1996 to autumn that year. "The timing of the sale may have had an adverse impact on the price achieved, since it was carried out at a time when the market was only beginning to understand the new commercial and regulatory structures within the rail industry."

Commentary, page 25





One of the Darcey Bussell bronzes at the centre of lawsuit

Reforms 'a body blow to personal pensions'

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

THE insurance industry railed against the Government yesterday, claiming that the introduction of stakeholder pension schemes will deliver a huge body blow to personal pensions.

Many insurers who depend on large margins from personal pensions charges will, the industry said, be threatened with a huge loss of business as personal pension are made to look unattractive by the new stakeholder pensions unveiled by Alistair Darling, the Social Security Secretary. The new schemes, it was claimed, could accelerate mergers and acquisition in the industry where consolidation is already rife.

Stephen Ingledew, of National Provident Institution, said: "We will look back in ten years' time and describe the introduction of stakeholder pensions as a turning point in the history of personal pensions.

"Few people with salaries under £50,000 will find the idea of a personal pension attractive. Those with a stakeholder pension who want to pay more than £3,600 each year towards retirement will not tolerate high charges from a personal pension when they are used to the efficiency of a stakeholder scheme.

"It will be very difficult for an insurer to tell a saver that he has to pay higher charges just because he wants to save more. It will mean that the personal pension will have limited appeal and will only be suitable for people at the top end of the market."

Although traditional insurers may find it impossible to offer stakeholder pensions because they have a high cost base, new entrants like Virgin Direct said they were "delighted with the proposals".

Ed Vaisey, of Virgin Direct, said: "It will allow people to save more in simple products and depending on the charging structure the Government sets out, we would be prepared to offer schemes on an individual basis."

Pearl Assurance, which sells pension and savings products door-to-door to low-income families, also welcomed the proposals. Richard Astle, head of government affairs, called on the Government to regulate the products themselves, and not the sales process, in order to keep costs down.

He said: "We could offer a product with a 1.35 per cent annual management fee, but only if the regulatory regime was reformed. Regulation weighs heaviest on the low- to middle-income groups who traditionally like to have face-to-face contact when buying financial services products." He welcomed the decision not to introduce compulsion, saying that would only have made people believe that the sum they had to contribute was sufficient to support them comfortably in old age.

The National Association of Pension Funds (NAPF), however, expressed concern that unless stakeholder pensions were compulsory, people would be unlikely to save any more for their retirement. Peter Murray, the chairman, said: "The Secretary of State was quoting one to two million people taking up stakeholder pensions. We would like to see 5 million take them out."

Pensions reform, page 1
Green Paper, pages 10, 11
Commentary, page 25

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5557.1	(+22.6)
Yield	2.90%	
FTSE All Share	2536.79	(+5.98)
Nikkei	14011.19	(-100.43)
New York:		
Dow Jones	8738.11	(+43.51)*
S&P Composite	1150.81	(+9.81)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5¼%*	(5%)
Long bond	103"₃₂*	(104"₃₂)
Yield	5.01%*	(4.96%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	6¼	(6⅛)
Life long gilt future (Mar)	118.59	(118.56)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6850*	(1.6933)
London:		
$	1.6837	(1.6872)
DM	2.7934	(2.7878)
FFr	9.3589	(9.3462)
SFr	2.2590	(2.2522)
Yen	195.95	(194.74)
£ index	100.7	(100.5)

$$$ DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.6580*	(1.6485)
FFr	5.5665*	(5.5300)
SFr	1.3410*	(1.3275)
Yen	116.64*	(115.57)
$ index	104.7	(104.2)

Tokyo close Yen 117.52

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent15-day(Feb)	$10.50	($10.40)

GOLD

London close	$292.95	($291.65)

* denotes midday trading prices

Call costs cut

Oftel, the telecoms regulator yesterday moved to bring down the cost of calling mobile phones from BT lines by 26 per cent in the next few months. The mobile phone companies, however, could yet challenge Oftel's ruling in the European Courts.
Page 24

MFI in red

MFI, the fitted kitchens and bedrooms retailer dived into the red in the first half to the tune of £26 million as it took a number of exceptional restructuring charges and reported a 10 per cent fall in UK sales.
Page 25

Tebbit v Tebbit in battle for Sears

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE £460 million attempt by Philip Green, the retail entrepreneur, to buy Sears took yet another twist yesterday as it pitched Lord Tebbit, the former Cabinet minister who has sat on the board of the struggling retail group for the past 11 years, against his merchant banker son, William.

Sears, the owner of the Miss Selfridge, Richards, Wallis, Warehouse and Freemans businesses, rejected Mr Green's approach, made through a private company, Medinbond, set up especially for the deal.

Mr Green said in a statement that he "has received indicative letters of support from a group of private investors including Tom Hunter, the former chairman and chief executive of Sports Division".

He said the offer, which would be wholly in cash, would be "in excess of 300p a share" but would be conditional on thorough due diligence checks of the Sears business, and on a board recommendation.

Sears, which is chaired by Sir Bob Reid, responded that it "noted the highly conditional nature of Mr Green's statement and the fact that it does not constitute an offer for the company. Furthermore, the board believes that the true value of Sears is not reflected by the price indicated".

William Tebbit is advising Mr Green for Rea Brothers, the investment bank he joined earlier this year after leaving Butterfield Securities. Mr Tebbit said that he had not discussed Sears, or the proposed deal, with his father.

Lord Tebbit said: "I cannot imagine what you think the problem is. My son is not a teenage child who lives in the house. It is not a particularly unusual situation."

PDFM, the institutional investor that owns more than 23 per cent of Sears, reiterated its position that 300p was not what it considered a sensible offer. Other shareholders were also dismissive of the approach. "Offers based on due diligence are not worth the paper they are not written on," one said.

Some analysts were less forgiving of the current management and were less hopeful of Sears' prospects. "In the absence of all this speculative interest the price would be 150p," John Richards, retail analyst at BT Alex Brown, said. The shares closed 6½p up at 259p.

Commentary, page 25



Tebbit: board member

Opera in battle over bronzes

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

THE troubled Royal Opera House, of which Sir Colin Southgate is chairman, faces a £1 million writ from Renaissance Editions, a promotions company commissioned by the ROH to make bronzes of opera and ballet stars.

The writ alleges that the ROH failed to promote the bronzes via its supporters, failed to give Renaissance access to the mailing list of supporters and failed to promote the bronzes in its publications.

The bronzes, 19 inches high and by sculptors including Michael Rizzello and Philip Jackson, depict artists such as Darcey Bussell, Placido Domingo and Joan Sutherland.

The writ is a fresh blow to the ROH, which has been in disputes over funding andrevised working practices.

Renaissance claims it spent about £50,000 producing the busts and £245,000 on promotion. It is also suing for estimated lost sales of £2.3 million.

The ROH says that its well-publicised troubles mean that it is not an appropriate time to promote the bronzes.

Inflation stays at target level

BY MATTHEW BARBOUR

INFLATION hit the Bank of England's target level for the fourth consecutive month in November, doing little to silence the clamour for further interest rate cuts in the new year.

The November annual rate of underlying inflation, which excludes mortgage interest payments, remained static at 2.5 per cent. Headline inflation fell 0.1 per cent to 3 per cent, its lowest rate since June last year.

Adding to the growing impression of dormant inflation after Monday's flat producer output prices figures, the Engineering Employers' Federation said yesterday that average pay settlements in the engineering sector fell from 3.2 per cent to 2.7 per cent in the quarter to December.

With all the economic signals pointing to a sharp slowdown in growth next year, economists said the Bank of England would remain under pressure to cut rates, perhaps as early as January, to avoid undershooting the inflation target.

Michael Saunders, economist at Salomon Smith Barney/Citibank, said: "With weakness in commodity prices, sagging demand and high inventory levels, underlying inflation is highly likely to fall below 2.5 per cent next year." He said that the headline inflation rate could fall to below 1 per cent in late 1999, the lowest since the early 1960s.

The main downward pressures in yesterday's retail prices index figures came from housing — as recent rate cuts started to filter through to lower mortgage payments — motoring and clothing. Upward pressure came from food, fares and travel, household goods and services.

The interest rate futures market fell slightly on the data, disappointed by the fact that the underlying rate of inflation had not dipped below its 2.5 per cent target.

The pound rose half a pfennig to DM2.794 on the back of the stronger dollar, despite being faced with the prospect of lower rates next year.

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Telephone: 0171-730 1234.
Heathrow Terminal 4.
Telephone: 0181-745 6724.

Mystery shrouds Newcastle approach

BY JASON NISSÉ

LEADING international media companies were yesterday distancing themselves from speculation that they may be about to bid for Newcastle United after the troubled football club said it had received a bid approach that might value the group at £158 million.

Sony, Time Warner, Telewest Communications, Granada, United News & Media and Carlton Communications all played down suggestions that they may be potential buyers.

Enic, the investment group that has a 25 per cent stake in Glasgow Rangers and came close to buying Tottenham Hotspur, and Scottish & Newcastle, the brewer that sponsors the Newcastle football team, also both denied they were planning to buy the club.

In response to sharp movements in its share price earlier this week, Newcastle yesterday made a statement to the Stock Exchange saying it had received a bid approach but adding any offer would be dependent on the outcome of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation into BSkyB's £623 million bid for Manchester United. It said the bid would not be "significantly in excess of" 110p a share.

Newcastle shares, which were floated last year at 135p, fell 6½p to 98½p on the news.

Rumours in the football industry suggested Douglas Hall, whose family company owns 57 per cent of Newcastle's shares, met representatives of Sony in Milan last week to agree a deal. Sony refused to comment on the speculation but repeated a statement it made earlier this year denying any interest in buying an English football team.

Mr Hall and Freddy Shepherd, who controls 7 per cent of the shares, gave undertakings at flotation that they would not sell any shares in the company for two years — an undertaking that expires this month. The return of the duo to the board last week led to the resignation of the chairman and a non-executive director.

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Peter Irvine is the author of Scotland the Best.

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(peat)

+

a suspicion of



(bourbon)

+

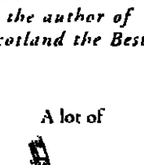
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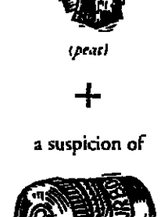
a hint of



(smokiness)

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ON BALANCE, THE FINEST MALT IN THE WORLD

Mobile phone firms may fight Oftel's price cuts in Europe

BY CHRIS AYRES

MOBILE PHONE companies could mount a challenge in the European courts against a decision yesterday by Oftel, the telecoms regulator, to order dramatic price cuts on calls from BT phones to Vodafone and Cellnet mobile handsets.

The decision is the first time Oftel has intervened on behalf of Britain's 12 million mobile phone users. The result should see the cost of calling a mobile from a BT phone falling on average from the current 30p a minute to just 22p in March.

The cuts, which Oftel claims could save consumers £1 billion over the next three years, are expected to hit BT's pre-tax profits by about £100 million. Vodafone and Cellnet, which also charge users to receive calls from BT lines, are also likely to suffer financially. Orange and One2One, the two smaller mobile companies, were not included in the investigation because of their size. It is understood that BT will accept Oftel's decision. However, it is thought that Cellnet — which is partly owned by BT — and Vodafone may challenge Oftel on the groundsthat it lacks legal authority to change "interconnect" prices between phone companies.

Oftel, which several months ago asked the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to investigate the price of calls between BT phones and mobiles, will decide on how to change the licences of BT, Cellnet and Vodafone early next year. The changes will come into effect by April.

Ian Morfett, managing director of BT products and services, yesterday said that it was possible that the mobile phone companies could challenge Oftel's right to make these changes. "An EC directive could put these licence changes out of Oftel's jurisdiction," he said. "They [the mobile phone companies] could challenge it in the European courts."

Cellnet and Vodafone refused to be drawn on the subject yesterday. An Oftel spokesman said: "We are convinced we have the powers to do this."

Calculation of call prices from BT phones to mobiles is complex. Most of the charge comes from the mobile phone company, with BT charging an extra sum for interconnection. The final charge is calculated by taking into account the many discount schemes offered by telephone companies, and adding VAT.

Tempus, page 26

Freepages losses deepen to £27m

FREEPAGES, the high-tech rival to Yellow Pages, yesterday reported a sharp increase in pre-tax losses to nearly £27 million from £15 million for the year to September 30, reflecting development costs. The company, which trades under the name of Scoot, and allows customers to find information about products and companies over the telephone and Internet, saw a 21 per cent rise in sales from £15 million to nearly £19 million, while losses per share rose from 3.3p to 5.4p. The company said that use of its telephone service had grown by 132 per cent, while use of its Internet service had grown by 456 per cent.

Robert Bonnier, the chief executive, said: "We are building up a complementary range of businesses, which we believe should take advantage of our existing Scoot network and extend the classified service with substantially lower development costs." Shares in Freepages yesterday fell 2p to 21.75p, compared with 51p last year.

Banana action prevents US split

BY CARL MORTISHED
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

THE United States has pulled back at the eleventh hour from launching a trade war with Europe after a legal manoeuvre by the European Commission.

Leon Brittan, the European Trade Commissioner, announced yesterday that he had asked the World Trade Organisation to rule on its new banana import regime in a move designed to disarm Washington's threat of unilateral sanctions.

Sir Leon said that if the US failed to make a case against the banana regime at the panel convened by the EU there would be a legal presumption that the regime was lawful.

He said: "We don't want to win that way. But it is quite a normal fact: if a court is convened, parties cannot avoid justice by running away from it."

The US Ambassador yesterday said that the EU's move made a mockery of the WTO's rules. However, it pulled back from publishing a long list of EU goods threatened with punitive tariffs. American complaints about the EU's preferential import regime for African and Caribbean bananas have escalated into full-scale confrontation.

Washington is pursuing a long drawn-out war against Europe's preferential regime for African and Caribbean bananas, alleging discrimination against Central American bananas.

The US succeeded last year in securing a WTO ruling that Europe's banana regime was illegal. Washington is now opposing the EU's revised regime and has rejected proposals for a new WTO panel, arguing that the 400-day procedure is too lengthy.



Kevin Hand said the deal was an important step in fulfilling Emap's international strategy

US buy sends Emap falling

BY RAYMOND SNODDY
MEDIA EDITOR

THE shares of Emap, the magazine, radio and exhibitions group, dropped sharply yesterday for the third day running as the company confirmed that it is to pay $1.21 billion (£720 million) for Petersen, a leading American publisher of specialist consumer magazines.

By far Emap's biggest acquisition, it is also its first significant move into the US market. The deal is being part-funded by a £359 million rights issue and values Petersen at $34 a share, a 45 per cent premium on the US company's closing price on Friday but only just above its 1998 high.

Kevin Hand, Emap chief executive, said yesterday that the Petersen acquisition represented "the outstanding opportunity for us to secure a successful, well-managed business in the US — the world's largest media market — and an important step towards fulfilling our international strategy."

The Emap share price, however, dropped 85p, a fall of 8 per cent to 965p, making a decline of 225p in all since Friday when rumours of a big acquisition began to spread.

Lorna Tilbian, media analyst at West LB Panmure, said yesterday that Emap had chosen "the right company but was probably paying the wrong price at the wrong time". Some analysts, while acknowledging the skills of the Emap management, fear the company could be buying at the top of the cycle.

Emap was outbid for Petersen three years ago.

Tempus, page 26

Distillers' deal off

A DEAL that could have secured the jobs of 500 workers at a bottling plant has fallen through. The proposed sale of United Distillers and Vintners' Strathleven plant in Dumbarton to John Dewar and Sons will not now take place, the companies said in a joint statement. The firms started discussions last month after an agreement by which Dewar would examine the suitability of the plant for its long-term business plans. Staff of both companies have been told of the decision and a special meeting of the task force set up to help to secure the plant's future has been called.

Halma shares slip

HALMA, the engineer, lifted first-half pre-tax profits 2 per cent, to £19.1 million. However, despite a bullish interim statement by David Barber, chairman, the shares fell 7½p to 122p. Mr Barber said that Halma, with its high margins and return on capital, should show "powerful defensive attributes" in an economic slowdown. Earnings per share were 3.65p (3.56p). The interim dividend is up 20 per cent, at 1.308p. Mr Barber also gave warning of difficult trading in Halma's South-East Asian and petrochemical industry businesses.

French aid for Toyota

THE European Commission will today approve French aid towards Toyota's Fr4 billion (£427 million) factory in Valenciennes, almost one year after the investment was announced. The aid consists of Fr216.9 million in direct grants and a tax break equivalent to Fr123 million, or 7.9 per cent of the total planned investment compared with a maximum 28 per cent allowed under EU rules. France won the investment in the face of stiff competition from Burnaston, near Derby, where Toyota's existing European manufacturing centre is located.

Rexam's bid backed

REXAM'S £380 million bid for PLM, the Swedish packaging company, has been recommended by PLM's board, which had originally indicated that it felt the offer to be too low. Rexam already speaks for 23 per cent of PLM after acquiring 10 million shares from Industrivarden, the Swedish investment group, earlier this month. PLM has a strong presence in markets for beverage cans and glass containers. The deal will make Rexam one of the world's top ten packaging companies. The UK group expects it to enhance earnings from 1999.

Hawtin criticises Bank

THE Bank of England's interest rate setters yesterday came under attack from Hawtin, the leisure group, which said that its doubling of earnings came despite the problems in the economy. Leonard Dovey, chairman, said: "The recent rate cuts are insufficient and all too late and will not allow UK businesses to be competitive or win back lost customers." The company reported pre-tax profits for the year to September 30 doubled at £4 million with earning per share at 3.92p (1.96p). The total dividend is up 11 per cent to 1.92p.

Leeds Group slumps

DETERIORATION in the textiles and fabric printing industries saw Leeds Group's profits fall by a third in the year to September 30. The company saw sales slip slightly, to £74 million, but pre-tax profits dive to £5.7 million. The year's dividend remains at 7p. Robert Wade, chairman, spoke of a "relentless deterioration" in trading conditions and outlook. The company said that an alleged irregularity by an employee of one of its subsidiaries had meant that assets had previously been overstated by £4.6 million.

BBA in $170m buy

BBA, the engineer, is buying AMR Combs, which services private and executive jets in the US, from AMR Corporation free of debt for $170 million (£100 million). AMR Combs, based at 11 sites in the US, will be fitted in alongside BBA's Signature Flight Support. Bob Quarta, BBA chief executive, said that it would let BBA "roll out further the successful concept of the 'one-stop shop', providing business aviation services and engine overhaul capabilities to the same customer".

Job losses threatened as Enterprise restructures

ENTERPRISE OIL warned its staff yesterday of a restructuring of its operations that could lead to a new round of layoffs (Carl Mortished writes).

Britain's largest independent oil exploration group is moving its UK operations base to Aberdeen, involving the transfer of up to 100 of the 400 staff based in London.

The oil company is trying to reduce its cost base by 10 per cent in response to the weakness of the oil price. A business review is underway and will report in January. A spokesman for Enterprise said that the company had for the second time this year reduced its oil price expectations. "We are now working on the basis of $10 to $12 per barrel."

Enterprise would not reveal redundancy figures. However, it indicated there would be no massive programme of redundancies. The company has already shed 80 people this year from a workforce of 500 worldwide.

Brown urges timetable for financial reform

GORDON BROWN, the Chancellor, last night urged the international community to commit itself to a tight timetable for reforming the world financial system (Janet Bush writes).

In a speech at Harvard University in the US, Mr Brown said: "We need to build quickly, not debate indefinitely."

He called for an agreement on new international codes of conduct on fiscal and monetary policy to be reached by the spring meeting of the International Monetary Fund in April. In addition he said there should be a new system of global financial regulation to be in place by the summer and a new mechanism for crisis prevention and resolution to be agreed by the end of 1999.

The Chancellor also urged the international community to agree on his proposed code of best practice on social policy to be agreed in the spring and for debt relief to be addressed with far more urgency over the coming year.

Pru's freeze to end

PRUDENTIAL yesterday said that it hopes to begin building up its direct sales force again next spring and to introduce new pay deals, after freezing recruitment 20 months ago. The insurance company began retraining staff in May 1997 after the Securities and Investments Board criticised its training and compliance standards. Its direct sales force has since fallen from 5,000 to 3,300 because of natural wastage and some employees' failure to complete retraining.

Commentary, page 25

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ON BALANCE, THE FINEST MALT IN THE WORLD

Science at centre of policy push

PETER MANDELSON, the Trade and Industry Secretary, will today put science at the centre of the Government's White Paper on competitiveness, saying that business and academia need to get closer (Christine Buckley writes).

Mr Mandelson yesterday told universities that they must sharpen their commercial approach. He said: "My aim is to ensure that our universities cease to be ivory towers and become engines of economic growth." He wants research to serve up more saleable ideas and to gear work towards commercial production. He said: "People should not just think research, but think of the application."

Mr Mandelson announced a £75 million fund to plough into university research equipment and a package of measures to encourage links between business and academia through the Government's "Foresight" programme.

Mr Mandelson said that he would introduce the White Paper in Parliament today by underlining the importance of science to promoting prosperity and business innovation. He will also give more details of tax breaks for research and development mentioned in Gordon Brown's pre-Budget statement.

Foster's takes stake in German wine club

BY JODY SCOTT

MILDARA BLASS, the wine division of Foster's Brewing Group, yesterday snared a significant slice of the German wine market, by paying £19 million for a controlling interest in Heinrich Maximilian Pallhuber, the wine club.

The Australian group bought a 51 per cent stake in the German direct marketer and plans to acquire the remaining 49 per cent within the next 18 months for a similar price.

Mildara Blass's entry into the German wine market is a key step in its plan to harness the increasing demand for wine clubs and direct-wine marketing in Europe and become the world's biggest wine club business.

The German market is the fourth biggest in the world and about six times the size of the Australian market.

In June Mildara Blass bought Dutch Wine Club, The Wine Exchange, and in 1997 took over Cellarmasters, the Australian group.

John Shortt, Mildara Blass's European managing director, said that, while wine clubs still accounted for only 2 per cent of the European wine sales, direct marketing was becoming more popular and offered huge development potential.

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A DEAL that could have secured the jobs of 500 workers at a bottling plant has fallen through. The proposed sale of United Distillers and Vintners' Strathleven plant in Dumbarton to John Dewar and Sons will not now take place, the companies said in a joint statement. The firms started discussions last month after an agreement by which Dewar would examine the suitability of the plant for its long-term business plans. Staff of both companies have been told of the decision and a special meeting of the task force set up to help to secure the plant's future has been called.

Halma shares slip

HALMA, the engineer, lifted first-half pre-tax profits 2 per cent, to £19.1 million. However, despite a bullish interim statement by David Barber, chairman, the shares fell 7½p to 122p. Mr Barber said that Halma, with its high margins and return on capital, should show "powerful defensive attributes" in an economic slowdown. Earnings per share were 3.65p (3.56p). The interim dividend is up 20 per cent, at 1.308p. Mr Barber also gave warning of difficult trading in Halma's South-East Asian and petrochemical industry businesses.

French aid for Toyota

THE European Commission will today approve French aid towards Toyota's Fr4 billion (£427 million) factory in Valenciennes, almost one year after the investment was announced. The aid consists of Fr216.9 million in direct grants and a tax break equivalent to Fr123 million, or 7.9 per cent of the total planned investment compared with a maximum 28 per cent allowed under EU rules. France won the investment in the face of stiff competition from Burnaston, near Derby, where Toyota's existing European manufacturing centre is located.

Rexam's bid backed

REXAM'S £380 million bid for PLM, the Swedish packaging company, has been recommended by PLM's board, which had originally indicated that it felt the offer to be too low. Rexam already speaks for 23 per cent of PLM after acquiring 10 million shares from Industrivarden, the Swedish investment group, earlier this month. PLM has a strong presence in markets for beverage cans and glass containers. The deal will make Rexam one of the world's top ten packaging companies. The UK group expects it to enhance earnings from 1999.

Hawtin criticises Bank

THE Bank of England's interest rate setters yesterday came under attack from Hawtin, the leisure group, which said that its doubling of earnings came despite the problems in the economy. Leonard Dovey, chairman, said: "The recent rate cuts are insufficient and all too late and will not allow UK businesses to be competitive or win back lost customers." The company reported pre-tax profits for the year to September 30 doubled at £4 million with earning per share at 3.92p (1.96p). The total dividend is up 11 per cent to 1.92p.

Leeds Group slumps

DETERIORATION in the textiles and fabric printing industries saw Leeds Group's profits fall by a third in the year to September 30. The company saw sales slip slightly, to £74 million, but pre-tax profits dive to £5.7 million. The year's dividend remains at 7p. Robert Wade, chairman, spoke of a "relentless deterioration" in trading conditions and outlook. The company said that an alleged irregularity by an employee of one of its subsidiaries had meant that assets had previously been overstated by £4.6 million.

BBA in $170m buy

BBA, the engineer, is buying AMR Combs, which services private and executive jets in the US, from AMR Corporation free of debt for $170 million (£100 million). AMR Combs, based at 11 sites in the US, will be fitted in alongside BBA's Signature Flight Support. Bob Quarta, BBA chief executive, said that it would let BBA "roll out further the successful concept of the 'one-stop shop', providing business aviation services and engine overhaul capabilities to the same customer".

Pru's freeze to end

PRUDENTIAL yesterday said that it hopes to begin building up its direct sales force again next spring and to introduce new pay deals, after freezing recruitment 20 months ago. The insurance company began retraining staff in May 1997 after the Securities and Investments Board criticised its training and compliance standards. Its direct sales force has since fallen from 5,000 to 3,300 because of natural wastage and some employees' failure to complete retraining.

Commentary, page 25

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells		Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.79	2.61	Japan Yen	210.99	193.45
Austria Sch	20.69	19.03	Malta	0.666	0.607
Belgium Fr	60.90	55.94	Netherlds Gld	3.346	3.051
Canada $	2.714	2.526	New Zealand $	3.35	3.11
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8724	0.8009	Norway Kr	13.77	12.63
Denmark Kr	11.24	10.35	Portugal Esc	293.05	277.02
Egypt	5.93	5.35	S Africa Rd	10.78	8.82
Finland Mrk	9.06	8.31	Spain Pta	249.25	230.46
France Fr	9.85	9.07	Sweden Kr	14.26	13.26
Germany Dm	2.952	2.726	Switzerland Fr	2.414	2.196
Greece Dr	498	456	Turkey Lira	571898	498544
Hong Kong $	13.87	12.67	USA $	1.790	1.647
Iceland	130	110			
Indonesia	16724	11724			
Ireland Pt	1.1815	1.0926			
Israel Shk	7.35	6.63			
Italy Lira	2944	2707			

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Unappetising fare in pension reform

COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Yesterday it was pensions, today it is competitiveness. The Government's pre-Christmas rush to publish its thoughts should provide some extra presents for those industrialists who have almost everything. What better, after the turkey and plum pudding, than to curl up with Peter Mandelson's musings on how to encourage entrepreneurship? But anyone following that with a browse through Alastair Darling's ideas for pensions reform is liable to suffer acute indigestion.

For what the Green Paper is proposing amounts to an extra burden on business, and, in particular, one that will impact on just those young, entrepreneurial concerns that Mr Mandelson, the Trade and Industry Secretary, is keen to set free from bureaucratic restraints.

While the pensions reforms being suggested do not amount to the revolution Frank Field had in mind, they do effectively shift on to business some of the burden that currently falls on the state. In order to stop people needing to bolster their meagre state pension with supplementary state benefits, there are to be secondary pensions for all, and employers, even the smallest, seem destined to have to ensure that they provide access to them.

Not that workers will have to take advantage of what is on offer. The lack of compulsion to pay into the new stakeholder pension may render it something of a damp squib unless the Government is to spend heavily on persuading those not of a savings disposition that they should take advantage of the scheme.

Incentives only work if people are aware of them. Tessas and Peps proved to be such a success not just because of the tax breaks on offer but because the providers invested huge sums in alerting the public to what was available. The new pension will not benefit from that massive promotion, unless the Government is planning to tap a slush fund that does not feature in the Green Paper's calculations. (The document is, however, packed with figures, some of which leave one wondering quite how they were arrived at. 'Please show your working', that phrase beloved of suspicious maths teachers, comes to mind as the Green Paper assures us that pension schemes will save £30 million a year under the proposed arrangements.)

The insistence that the new pensions must be low cost was inevitable but must still be a disappointment to those companies that had been salivating at the prospect of millions of new pensions subscribers coming their way. That the money will head into index tracking funds seem certain. Given that Isa savings will largely be going that way, the combined effect can only exaggerate the current trend in the stock market, boosting the large cap stocks at the expense of small companies.

Perhaps Peter Mandelson could address that point when he moves on to his next volume.

Sears chief should give Green light

Sir Bob Reid's reaction to Philip Green's approach could not have been more predictable. The Sears chairman has already bolted the doors and the chances of him welcoming in the controversial retail entrepreneur and allowing him to pore over the books were slightly lower than that of the former rail man being invited to take on the chairmanship of Marks & Spencer. Phillips & Drew, Sears's main shareholder, had already dismissed an offer of about 325p a share for its 24 per cent stake. Now Sir Bob's refusal to treat with Mr Green indicates that other shareholders may not have the chance to decide whether they would like to take the money rather than trust the Sears board to do any better in the future than it has in the past.

This may be galling for those private shareholders who have seen the business dissipated under Sir Bob's reign, but that appears to be the position. Mr Green seems highly reluctant to make a hostile bid for the group, with all the costs that it might incur and no certainty of success but, unless he does take that risk, he may have to go back to trying to squeeze profits out of his existing operations.

The chances are that he will have more success at that than Sir Bob. Mr Green has already demonstrated with Olympus how he can take a business that Sears despaired of and turn it into a very valuable commodity. That, of course, is why Sears is particularly wary of selling to him now. But if he is spurned now, the board may do some of his work for him. Without a bidder on the scene, the Sears share price will fall back hard. Takeover talk has pushed it up towards Mr Green's valuation but, not so long ago, it languished at 146½p.

Profit forecasts for the group are being cut back and the betting is that January's trading statement will make very gloomy reading indeed. Sir Bob may blithely say that he believes a fair value for the shares is between £5 and £6 but, left to its own devices, the market is likely to take a somewhat less optimistic view.

Undoubtedly, Philip Green had far advanced plans to dismember Sears and profitably sell the component parts. Sir Bob will be trying to do the same but his record is not encouraging. The credit card operations will find a buyer soon, and some of the proceeds may be used to partially fulfil an old promise to hand cash back to shareholders. But with Freemans heading into the red, Sir Bob might do worse than give the Green light.

NAO highlights Short selling

With all the benefit of hindsight, the National Audit Office has come to the view that Railtrack was sold for considerably less than it was worth.

Looking at today's share price, no one can doubt that the conclusion is right. But the fact is that there were moments when it seemed that Sir Bob Horton would not be able to give the rail business away.

It may be that the advisers did not fully grasp the value of the Railtrack property portfolio. Only now is the company, under the guidance of the enthusiastic Gerald Corbett, exploring the myriad possibilities for making the most of all those arches. The development of shopping centres over or under stations makes wonderful sense, fitting in neatly with John Prescott's plans for encouraging shoppers to leave their cars behind.

But when it came to selling the rail track operator to a very wary marketplace, the valuations of the business were nigh on irrelevant. For the political risk was what determined the Railtrack price. The inimitable Clare Short's declaration that the privatisation would be effectively reversed under a Labour government sent many would-be investors heading for cover. Those who took the risk and bought the shares have made a killing far beyond the NAO's estimate of the under-valuation. Should Labour proceed with its plans to privatise the Tote and Air Traffic Control, it will face a less suspicious market place.

Capital pain

LLOYD'S of London was recently persuaded to allay fears that it had a secret plan to drive out the individual names in favour of a move towards dependence on corporate capital. Given the news yesterday from Cox Insurance, the market may have to become rather more enthusiastic about encouraging a new generation of names to put up their cash. Cox's plunging share price is not going to encourage investors into the new Lloyd's vehicles but there will always be some individuals prepared to be names.

MFI cuts dividend in wake of first-half loss

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

MFI, the furniture retailer, has cut its dividend after tumbling to a £26 million loss in the first half as the company took a raft of restructuring charges and reported a 10 per cent fall in sales.

The company yesterday said it is paying an interim dividend of 0.7p, down from 1.8p per share at the same stage last year, after reporting losses of £26 million, against a pre-tax profit of £35.4 million 12 months ago.

The figures for the 28 weeks to November 7 were weighed down by exceptional items as the company took charges totalling £34.8 million relating mainly to the restructuring of the UK business.

UK group retail sales in the first half were 10.6 per cent down on last year with the fall in its core product area of kitchens and bedrooms coming in at 8.4 per cent.

The company said the sales fall in its main business was in line with the sector as a whole, and that its market share at 27 per cent of the fitted kitchen market and 26 per cent in fitted bedrooms was constant.

Operating profit in the UK business, before exceptional costs, was £8.6 million (£43.9 million), the drop exacerbated by the sale of discontinued products at discounted prices.

The company declined to comment on trading in the first month of the second half of its financial year, but said it would give an update on trading in March.

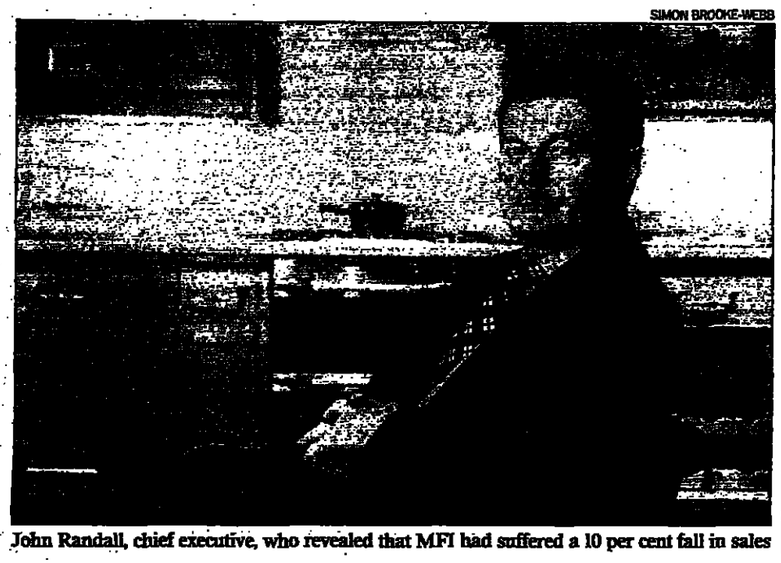
MFI said it was spending £60 million this year in the switch from having warehouses next to its stores, which previously allowed customers to take many of their goods home in their cars. It is now concentrating on delivering all goods from 12 central depots.

The company has cut its staff by more than 700 and expects to have achieved a total reduction of 1,500 by April. This should cut £25 million a year from payroll costs.

Derek Hunt, who said in September that he would be retiring as chairman, said that the company was still looking for a replacement. It has recruited John Hancock, a director of WH Smith, as a non-executive.

MFI's shares, which hit an all-time low of 26p on Monday, put on 4p yesterday, having fallen from a high of 209p in 1997.

SIMON BROOKE-WEBB



John Randall, chief executive, who revealed that MFI had suffered a 10 per cent fall in sales

Marston's attacks bid plan

THE gloves came off in the battle of the Midlands brewers yesterday as Marston, Thompson & Evershed, which is under siege from Wolverhampton & Dudley Breweries, dismissed W&DB's financial performance as "woeful" (Dominic Walsh writes).

In the formal defence sent out yesterday to shareholders, Michael Hurdle, Marston's chairman, dismisses W&DB's £262 million bid as an attempt "to prop up their flagging prospects and disguise their poor operational performance" with "the same tired strategy". While admitting that both companies had underperformed in recent years, Mr Hurdle claims Marston's own returns have been superior.

W&DB said comparisons were "utterly irrelevant" and that the takeover would "create critical mass and drive down costs".

First Choice to cut holidays

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

FIRST CHOICE is to cut the number of holidays it has on offer by about 4 per cent in an attempt to avoid a glut of discount offers that, in the past, has smashed tour operators' margins.

The move comes in the wake of a decision by Airtours four months ago to rein in the number of holidays it sells by about 5 per cent.

"Potentially, we are seeing a slowdown in the economy and therefore we are taking a prudent view," Ian Clubb, chairman, said. "It is our responsibilty to shareholders to ensure capacity is managed." Three years ago the market was flooded with cut-price packages and First Choice struggled to break even.

Mr Clubb said a consolidated industry, centred around the market leaders, Thomson Travel Group, Airtours and First Choice, meant that the operators were now better able to manage demand than in the past. He predicted that profits at First Choice, the UK's third-largest tour operator, would grow despite the current consumer gloom.

Pre-tax profits in the year to October 31 came in at £50 million before exceptionals, up from £15.4 million a year ago. Earnings per share rose to 13p from 3.7p and the company is paying a final dividend of 2.2p (1.9p), giving a full-year payout of 3.2p (2.8p).

The company is aiming to sell most of its packages at full price before the end of March next year which marks the start of the 1999 summer season. Growth in summer 1999 sales have slowed by about three points from earlier levels but are still about 14 per cent ahead of the same period last year, Mr Clubb said. The next crucial period for the company is the January to March quarter when about 35 per cent of total capacity is sold.

Securicor delivers slowdown

THE slowdown in the high street is hitting Securicor, the cash collection and parcel delivery group that also owns 40 per cent of Cellnet, the mobile phone company (Paul Durman writes).

Securicor Omega Express, its main distribution company, delivers 80 per cent of the cassettes and compact discs sold in the UK. With more than half of the division's deliveries going to the high street, slower than expected retail sales have cut profits by 15 per cent to £24.3 million in the year to September 30.

Overall, group pre-tax profits were below expectations at £83.5 million. Underlying profits at Cellnet fell to £87.8 million from £95.2 million. A final dividend of 1.5p a share lifts the total payout by 10.9 per cent to 1.93p.

Coutts & Co

Notice of Interest Rates
for Private and Business Clients
effective from 15 December 1998

	gross interest rate p.a.	gross compounded annual rate (C.A.R.)
Current and Deposit Accounts for Private Clients		
Current Account with Cash Management Option*‡, Reserve Account* and Mortgage Reserve Account*‡		
£100,000+	4.375%	4.447%
£50,000-£99,999	4.05%	4.111%
£20,000-£49,999	3.25%	3.289%
£5,000-£19,999	2.75%	2.778%
TESSA*	6.25%	6.398%
Charity TESSA*	5.625%	5.744%
Deposit Accounts for Private and Business Clients		
Three Month Reserve Account*		
£50,000+	5.625%	5.744%
£25,000-£49,999	4.50%	4.576%
£10,000-£24,999	4.00%	4.06%
7 Day Notice Deposit Account†	1.00%	1.00%
Deposit Accounts for Business Clients		
Reserve Accounts for Businesses/Charities/Societies*		
£250,000-£1 million	3.65%	3.70%
£100,000-£249,999	3.40%	3.443%
£25,000-£99,999	3.20%	3.238%
£10,000-£24,999	2.60%	2.625%

*Interest is paid quarterly †Interest is paid half-yearly
‡Interest is paid only on the portion of the cleared balance which exceeds £5,000.

- Interest is payable on Reserve Account balances (excluding the Mortgage Reserve Account) below the minimum level at a gross rate of 1% p.a. (Gross C.A.R. 1%).
- Interest will be paid after deducting tax (where applicable) at the prescribed rate.
- The gross compounded annual rate is the rate where gross interest payments are retained on the account during the year.
- We are also able to place sterling and other currencies in the Money Markets. All rates are subject to variation.

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THE COUTTS GROUP IS THE INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE BANKING ARM OF NATWEST GROUP.

Computer group fails to impress

BY CHRIS AYRES

COMPUTERLAND, the computer reseller and training group, yesterday reported a 27 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for the six months ended October 31 from £398,000 to £507,000, while sales nearly doubled to £19.4 million.

Earnings per share fell from 5.7p to 3.8p, and the company will pay an interim dividend of 0.8p (0.65p) on March 1. The results failed to impress the City, which is concerned over falling volumes and margins in the sector. The shares fell 20p to 230p.

Computerland said that the integration of its two recent acquisitions, Netman and KDL, had been successful, the proportion of sales coming from its IT services division had increased and its training business had grown strongly in the Midlands and London.

Graham Gilbert, chairman and managing director, said: "Trading in November has been in line with expectations. The board remains confident of the outcome for the year."

NFC sees fall in UK demand

BY ADAM JONES

NFC, the deliveries and removals group including Exel Logistics and Pickfords, yesterday insisted it can still grow despite a weakening UK market.

NFC yesterday said that removals in the UK fell by 4 per cent in the third quarter of this year, with demand still falling.

However, Gerry Murphy, chief executive, said that NFC was also benefiting from belt-tightening by UK customers, because removers are needed if a site is shut or a company goes to cheaper headquarters.

Full-year pre-tax profits rose 9 per cent, to £126.1 million, before exceptionals. Turnover fell to £2.33 billion, from £2.41 billion, reflecting the sale or closure of businesses. US logistics turnover rose 11 per cent.

Pre-exceptional earnings per share rose to 10.8p (10p). The final dividend falls to 3p (4.6p), reflecting a new policy of keeping dividend cover at two times, making 5p (7.1p).

Tempus, page 26

Pearson warns over strength of sterling

PEARSON, the publishing and entertainment group, gave warning yesterday that the strength of sterling would reduce operating profits by £8 million (Raymond Snoddy writes).

Despite the currency cost Pearson, whose businesses range from the *Financial Times* to Penguin and the merchant banking businesses of Lazards, said its second-half trading was "in line with expectations".

Pearson said group revenues and operating profits continued to grow despite planned revenue investment in all of the company's operations, particularly the Financial Times Group. The *FT* itself was hitting new circulation peaks on the Continent and in the US but not in the UK.

Pearson acknowledged that the general economic outlook was more difficult than 12 months ago. Analysts are looking for pre-exceptional, pre-tax profits of about £367 million for the full year.

Propaganda:

"BA is more reliable than *easyJet*"

Fact:

Reliable easyJet beats big carriers

THE NO-FRILLS airline easyJet is regarded a more reliable service by business travellers than major carriers such as British Airways, British Midland and KLM according to a new survey by Company Barclaycard, Stanley Slaughter writes.

Although these three leading airlines were the most used by U.K. business travellers, their regular fliers gave them the lowest mark for reliability.

While a third of easyJet regulars said its reliability was excellent, the corresponding figures for British Midland, KLM and BA from their regulars were 29 per cent, 23 per cent and 22 per cent.

its customers rating it excellent for in-flight service (59 per cent) and for quality of food (59 per cent). The respective figures for BA in these categories were 17 per cent, five and five.

Heavy hitters such as BA and KLM were also given further cause to worry with a majority of business travellers saying smaller airlines give better service and quality.

In last year's survey, 53 per cent said big airlines gave better service, with only 40 per cent plumping for the small players. But this year the figures are exactly reversed.

The number of women worried about security rose from 77 per cent to for men the figure was cent to 68.

Despi ness t... has'

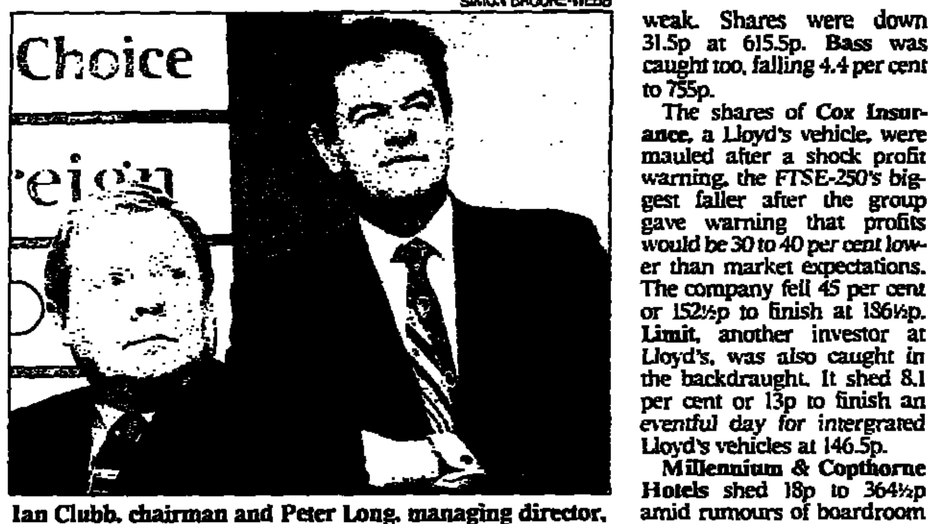
The Daily Telegraph
18/11/98 Pg 35.



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STOCK MARKET  SAEED SHAH

Telecoms regulator fails to dent shares



SIMON BROOKE-WEBB

Ian Clubb, chairman and Peter Long, managing director, who saw shares of First Choice close down 1p at 100p

TELECOMS shares showed confidence in a bright future. *Despite mobile phone operators being clobbered by the regulator*, for charging too much for some kinds of calls, telecoms shares were among the day's winners.

Vodafone was 42p better at 945p. **Orange** rose 25p to *638p*. **Cable & Wireless**, which owns mobile operator One-2-One jointly with MediaOne Group, climbed 12p to 702p, while **BT** put on 19p to 879p.

Oftel told BT to cut the cost of some calls to Cellnet and Vodafone *by 25 percent*.

However, BT's Cellnet partner, **Securicor**, fell 3p to 477½p after disappointing results, having been as low as 455p during the day.

The FTSE 100 index spent most of the day in the red, amid *dull volumes with no* clear direction. It managed to pull itself up from being *down 22.9 points at 5,511.6*, but a rise on Wall Street when it kicked in saw the FTSE 100 close up 22.6 *on the day at* 5,557.1.

Shares of **Tarmac** fell 12¼p to close at 101¾p after the company said on Monday that it had ended merger *talks* with **Aggregate Industries**. Aggregate lost 2.25p to close at *68.75p*.

Emap dropped 8.3 per cent, after the company announced a rights issue that disappointed to buy US group Petersen for £720 million pounds. The rights was pitched at 875p and openly traded shares dropped *80p to 970p*.

Pearson benefited from relief that a trading statement *contained no nasty surprises*. The shares bounced up 48p to £11.10.

Also gaining ground was **MFI**, which lifted 4p — or more than 15 per cent — to *30p on optimism* over a future recovery despite a big drop in first-half profits reported yesterday. The rise was put into stark relief because the stock had hit an all-time low of 24p on Monday.

Newcastle United ended its *run of share rises after the* company revealed it had received a bid approach but said *any* offer would *not* be significantly in excess of 110p a share.

There was disappointment that the possible bid was not pitched higher, and that any offer will not come until, and if, the BSkyB offer for Manchester *United is* cleared by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

First Choice reported full-year pre-tax profits more than three times higher from a year ago at £50 million, above analysts forecasts. After putting on 7½p earlier in the day, it closed down 1p down at 100p.

Sears poured scorn on a *potential offer of 300p a share* from retail entrepreneur Philip Green as not *representing the true value of the* home-shopping to fashion group. But hopes of a take out still stimulated the shares, which finished up 6½p at 259p.

Diageo, the GrandMet Guinness combine was also weak. Shares were down 31.5p at 615.5p. **Bass** was *caught too, falling 4.4 per cent* to 755p.

The shares of **Cox Insurance**, a Lloyd's vehicle, were mauled after a shock profit warning, the *FTSE-250's* biggest faller after the group gave warning that profits would be *30 to 40 per cent lower* than market expectations. The company fell 45 per cent or 152½p to finish at 186½p. **Limit**, another investor at Lloyd's, was also caught *in* the backdraught. It shed 8.1 per cent or 13p to finish an *eventful day for intergrated* Lloyd's vehicles at 146.5p.

Millennium & Copthorne Hotels shed 18p to 364½p amid rumours of boardroom changes.

Forget Friday the 13th, between 10:00 am and 10:45 am *on Friday December 18 is the* double witching period, the quarterly event where the Exchange Delivery Settlement Price (EDSP) for the FTSE 100 index futures coincides with the monthly EDSP for the FTSE 100 index options.

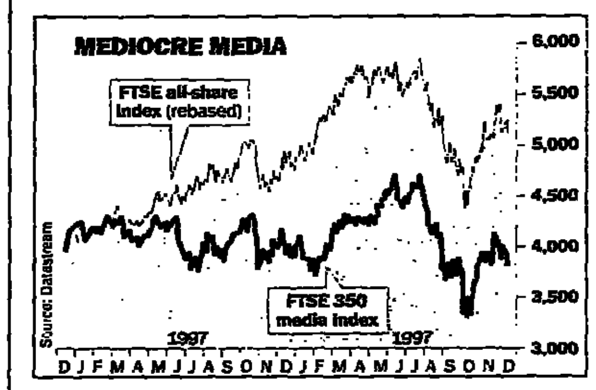
Natwest Stockbrokers has warned its clients against dealing during this time, which *is characterised by* high levels of trading activity and unpredictable price movements, whilst the market attempts to align the options, futures and underlying *share* prices.

The smaller oil firms **Premier** and **Lasmo** were also under pressure. Both lost 10 per cent plus with Lasmo closing *down 12 at 102¼p* and Premier off 2p at 17p.

Sugar giant **Tate & Lyle** *had few friends either*. A rally earlier in the autumn has fizzled out and the downward trend for the stock, which has persisted for most of this year, seems set. The shares lost 20½p to close at 326p.

☐ **GILT-EDGED**: The gilts market reacted quietly to the inflation news. The Liffe long gilt December contract was a 0.05 *higher at* £118.61 while the March contract was 0.02 higher at £118.58.

☐ **NEW YORK**: US shares moved generally higher in cautious trading as investors reacted nervously to a fresh round of profits warnings and the ongoing worries over the future of Bill Clinton. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up *43.51* points to 8,739.51.



THE media sector has trailed the stock market for more than two years, though yesterday the sector rose 1 per cent on the back of Pearson's reassuring trading statement. Reuters gained 17p to finish at 540p.

Investors in regional *newspaper operators* are encouraged by the fact that advertising has not been massacred by the current economic downturn. Longer-term social trends that may take consumers away from local press also seem muted. Adscene Group, the regional newspaper business, yesterday joined in the fun, putting on 8p to 126p and saying that advertising revenue was holding up well.

There is, nevertheless, plenty of gloom around. Tony O'Reilly's Independent Newspapers, owner of *The Independent* newspaper, fell 7p to a low of 197p yesterday.

Reed-Elsevier, the Anglo-Dutch group, and United News & Media have recently given warning that profits will fall short of market forecasts.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	8739.11 (+43.51)
S&P Composite	1150.81 (+9.61)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	14011.19 (-100.43)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	9952.84 (+127.63)
Amsterdam:	
AEX Index	1083.89 (+18.27)
Sydney:	
AO	2697.9 (+11.4)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	4574.50 (+51.64)
Singapore:	
Straits	1358.29 (-11.21)
Brussels:	
BEL20	3308.95 (+67.20)
Paris:	
CAC-40	3673.76 (+10.55)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	1298.90 (+11.80)
London:	
FT 30	3357.5 (-1.0)
FTSE 100	5557.1 (+22.6)
FTSE 250	4681.3 (-25.2)
FTSE 350	2627.6 (+6.7)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2545.84 (+15.93)
FTSE All-Share	2536.79 (+5.98)
FTSE Non Financials	2602.06 (+5.80)
FTSE Fixed Interest	155.90 (-0.03)
FTSE Govt Secs	115.16 (+0.21)
Bargains	63764
SEAQ Volume	808.5m
US$	1.6835 (-0.0034)
German Mark	2.7929 (+0.0063)
Exchange Index	100.7 (+0.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.4281
£:SDR	1.1936
RPI	164.4 Nov (3.0%) Jan 1987 = 100
RPIX	162.0 Nov (2.5%) Jan 1987 = 100

RECENT ISSUES

AIM VCT	100	...	
Airtours Sub Cov 2004	102¾	...	
Artisan (UK)	4½	...	
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Cap	58½	+	1
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Inc	118	+	½
Chariot	117½	...	
Collective Assets Trust	117	...	
Connaught	149½	...	
Financial Objects	240½	−	1
First Active	289½	+	2
Five Arrws Uts Cv Ln 2040	116	−	¼
Garban	231½	...	
MHIT Secs Zero Div Pf	52½	...	
Marley B	11	...	
Monthly High Inc Geared	51	...	
Nat Bldg Mits Cv Pf	105	...	
Natural Building Mtls	5	...	
Offshore Tool & Energy	15½	...	
Piccadilly Growth Ts	95	...	
REXAM B (100)	94	...	
Singer & Frd AIM VCT	100	...	
Xenova Warrants	13½	...	

RIGHTS ISSUES

ILP n/p (7)	1¾	...	
PPL Therapeutics n/p (80)	5½	−	2½

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Deutsche Bk	3484¾	+225	+ 6.9
Avon Rubber	517½	+ 31½	+ 6.4
API	297½	+ 17½	+ 6.2
Driefontein	268½	+ 14¾	+ 5.8
Iceland Group	237½	+ 13	+ 5.7
Racal Elect	330½	+ 17½	+ 5.5
Capita Group	527½	+ 26½	+ 5.2
Electrocomponts	395	+ 19	+ 5.0
Debenhams	354½	+ 17	+ 5.0
CMG	1564	+ 70	+ 4.6
Vodafone	945	+ 42	+ 4.6
Sainsbury J	469	+ 18½	+ 4.1
Orange	638	+ 25	+ 4.0
Rio Tinto Ltd	674	+ 21¾	+ 3.3

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Cox Insce	186½	−152½	− 44.9
Elec Retail Sys	160	− 32½	− 16.8
Intelligent Env	39½	− 6½	− 14.1
Abbey	175	− 25	− 12.5
Tarmac	101¾	− 12¼	− 10.7
Cape	83½	− 10	− 10.6
Reunion Mng	42½	− 5	− 10.5

Dial P for profits

THERE was surprisingly little angst among owners of mobile phone shares yesterday. The telecoms regulator is seeking significant *tariff* cuts yet shares in Vodafone, British Telecom and Cable & Wireless all raced ahead. Relief that Oftel's recommendations were *no more stringent* than expected, and are unlikely to change further before the regulator alters the licences of mobile phone companies *early next year, seems* to have soothed nerves.

The changes will hurt, however. Mobile phone companies will be prevented from charging for unanswered calls, and the price of calls from BT landlines to mobiles will fall from an average of 30p per minute *to 22p* by March 1999. Moreover, there is a nasty sting in the tail. Under Oftel's recommendations, Vodafone and Cellnet will have to cut the price they charge on calls from BT fixed-line telephones to their networks by about 6 per cent a year for the next two years, while BT *will have to cut the price* it charges for these calls by about 4 per cent a year. Although BT claims that competition would have forced these *prices down* anyway, the reduction is severe.

BT says that its profits will be hit by about £100 million for this coming year. The changes will obviously hit Vodafone and Cellnet too, although it is not yet clear whether or not they will find ways to get around the problem. *They could*, for example, simply decide to raise the price of monthly line rental.

Yesterday's share price rises smack of overexuberance but the mobile phone industry is still worth buying into. It is one of the few sectors that can confidently predict *sustainable* market growth. The party may be quietening down, but it is not over yet.

Cox Insurance

THE Cox profit warning threatens to push emergent *integrated Lloyd's vehicles* back into their primeval soup, barely before they managed to haul themselves clear.

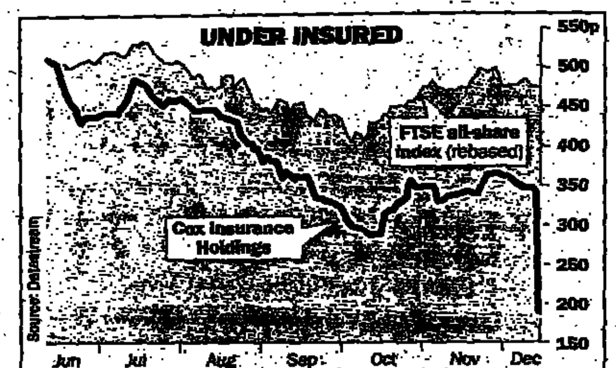
It will certainly be difficult for Cox to re-establish *investor confidence*. It was only a few short months ago that *shareholders were persuaded to subscribe to a rights issue* at more than twice the current *price*. That rubs salt into the wounds opened yesterday.

It may be that the bulk of the problems are specific to Cox and the knock on to rivals will be muted. *But such is the* novelty of this mini sector, and such are the difficulties *coming to appropriate share* valuations, that investors should be prepared for the worst.

Attempts to value shares in intergrated Lloyd's vehicles must start, as with investment *trusts*, with net asset value. The double use of capital, however, means that ILVs can trade at a premium to NAV because the capital in the vehicle earns investment profits at the same time as it earns profits from insuring risks.

The size of the premium depends on the proficiency as an investment trust and the profitability of underwriting. Premiums, clearly, depend on the ability of management. This is difficult *for outsiders to* assess but the Cox copybook is well and truly blotted.

Cox shares now trade at about 1.8 times net assets, down from 3.5 times yesterday. *Given the scale of the* disappointments, this is still not cheap. Sell.



Emap

WHAT is this strange thing *accompanying Emap's US* acquisition? Golly it is a rights issue, a once popular way of *financing acquisitions* that was in danger of joining the short-haired bumble bee on the extinct species list.

Indeed when the Office of Fair Trading wanted to investigate whether the City was charging too much in underwriting fees, its inquiries were hampered by a shortage of good examples.

In truth, Emap's one-for-five issue at 875p shows why rights issues are unpopular. *Shareholders have little* choice but to subscribe despite the fact that the shares tumbled 80p to 970p on the news. To stay out means dilution of one's interest. If you started the day with £1,000 invested in Emap, you have the choice of investing £166 and ending up with shares worth £1,108 or investing nothing *and seeing the value of your investment cut to £923. Many* Emap shareholders might think it is better not to invest. *The US has been a graveyard* of ambitions and Emap has so much to go for on the Continent after building its French beachhead that expansion into America seems like a distraction. Also it is not Emap's style to make large purchases. This company is known for its successful launches and bolt-on deals.

However, anyone who underestimated Emap in the past has ended up ruing the day. *The shares have consistently* impressed. Emap may be holding a gun to investors' *heads, but they should* give the group the ammo for this purchase.

NFC

NFC, the deliveries and removals group, has been a lousy investment in recent years. *Having touched 287p* in 1994, the shares closed at just 117p yesterday. Is the *worst behind it?*

NFC *has cleared up most* of the mess left after an ill-advised attempt to set up a pan-*European food distribution* network. Food logistics businesses in France and Germany are still losing money but they are leaking less and only Germany is unlikely to become profitable eventually.

NFC has also sold off cash-hungry businesses, including Lynx, the parcel delivery arm. As a result it returned *£307 million to shareholders*, which was nice.

Yet having extricated itself *from troublesome sidelines* NFC is now being hurt by the slowdown in UK economic activity. *Although a slowdown* brings new work of its own — that is small compensation for the kind of decline in demand for removals brought with a weakening housing market.

Boom times are better for NFC. *Until strength returns* the shares can be left alone.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Dec	825-825	Mar	1042-1047
Mar	932-935	May	1056-1062
May	954-955	Jul	1076-1075
Jul	976-975	Sep	1077-1084
Sep	[illegible]		
Dec	1019-1019		Volume: 4261

ROBUSTA COFFEE

Jan	1370-1370	Sep	[illegible]
Mar	1523-1522	Nov	[illegible]
May	1757-1755	Jan	[illegible]
Jul	1750-1740		Volume: [illegible]

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters: [illegible]

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

[illegible]

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	9.85	−0.15
Brent 15 day (Jan)	10.25	−0.15
Brent 15 day (Feb)	10.50	−0.15
W Texas Intermediate (Jan)	11.40	−0.20
W Texas Intermediate (Feb)	11.80	−0.10

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

[illegible]

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL [illegible]

BRENT (6.00pm) [illegible]

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t) / LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t): [illegible]

LIFFE POTATO (£/t): [illegible]

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k): [illegible]

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10 pt): [illegible]

(Official) (Volume prev day) LONDON METAL EXCHANGE Rudolf Wolff

[illegible]

LIFFE OPTIONS

[illegible]

FTSE INDEX (*5557)

Strike	Calls Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jun	Puts Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Jun
5400	165	305	424	482	595½	11½	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	440
5450	125½	271½	394½	452	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
5500	7?	242½	364½	42?	556	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
5550	62½	214	335	390½	—	65	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	—
5600	[illegible]	185½	305½	359½	526½	30	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	517
5650	[illegible]	159½	276	329	—	12?	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	—
5700	11½	139½	249	302	477	167½	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	537
5750	5½	119½	227½	279½	—	215½	296	[illegible]	441½	—

December 15 Total: 3646 Calls: 2574 Puts: 1072

*Underlying security price

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Dec 98	118.53	118.70	118.50	118.61	96
Previous open interest 108416	Mar 99	118.52	118.71	118.36	118.59	22948
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 99				115.89	0
Previous open interest 0						
Five Year Gilt	Dec 98	109.25	109.85	109.55	109.83	3
Previous open interest 235	Mar 99				109.89	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 99	114.08	114.11	113.63	113.69	5846
Previous open interest 40216						
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 99	134.52	134.54	134.40	134.54	1041
	Jun 99				133.54	0
Three Mth Sterling	Dec 98	93.545	93.555	93.520	93.530	22131
	Mar 99	94.460	94.490	94.390	94.440	41220
Previous open interest 1142378	Jun 99	94.850	94.900	94.800	94.860	29191
Three Mth Euromark	Jan 99	96.795	96.795	96.790	96.795	2900
Previous open interest 1978190	Jun 99	96.385	96.990	96.975	96.990	39124
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 99	96.880	96.890	96.870	96.885	4850
Previous open interest 436302	Jun 99	96.550	96.590	96.570	96.590	[illegible]
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 99	98.520	98.510	98.500	98.530	9480
Previous open interest 133299	Jun 99	98.510	98.510	98.420	98.440	1894
Three Mth Euro	Jan 99				96.795	0
Previous open interest 10518	Jan 99				96.990	0
FTSE 100	Dec 98	5550.0	5560.0	5513.0	5547.0	43329
Previous open interest 230454	Mar 99	5600.0	5607.0	5537.0	5587.0	32912

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6¼ Finance House 7½

Discount Market Loans: O'night high: 6½ Low 5¼ Week fixed: 6¼

Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 5½; 3 mth 5¾; Sell: 2 mth 5⅝; 3 mth 5⅝

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	6⅛-6⅟₁₆	6⅛-6	6⅛-6	5⅞-5¾	
Sterling Money Rates:	6⅛-6⅟₁₆	6⅛-6	6-6⅛	6⅟₁₆-6	5⅞-5¾
Interbank:	6⅛-6	6⅛-6	6-6¼	6-6	5¾-5⅝
Overnight: open 6¼ close 6¼					
Local Authority Deps:	6¼	n/a	6¼	5⅞	5¾
Sterling CDs:	6⅛-6	6-6¼	6-6¼	5⅞-5¾	5¾-5⅝
Dollar CDs:	5.47	5.3	5.10	4.95	4.86
Building Society CDs:	6-6¼	6-6⅛	6-6¼	6⅟₁₆-6	5¾-5⅝

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	5-4½	5⅛-5¼	5¼-5	5⅛-4⅞	5¼-4¾
Deutschemark:	n/a	3⅛-3	3¼-3⅛	3⅛-3	3⅛-3
French Franc:		3⅛-3	3⅛-3	3⅛-3	3⅛-3
Swiss Franc:		1⅜-1⅛	1⅜-1¼	1⅜-1¼	1¼-1
Yen:		¼-⅛	¼-⅛	¼-⅛	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $292.00-292.40 **Close:** $292.70-293.30 **High:** $292.70-293.30 **Low:** $291.50-292.00 **AM:** $292.50 **PM:** $292.55

Krugerrand: $294.00-296.00 (£174.00-176.00)

Platinum: $352.30 (£209.45) **Silver:** $4.905 (£2.905) **Palladium:** $297.00 (£176.20)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mid Rates for December 15	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Amsterdam	3.1467-3.1528	3.1487-3.1496	1-1pr	2½-2½pr
Brussels	57.59-57.730	57.590-57.700	19-14pr	46-39pr
Copenhagen	10.634-10.645	10.629-10.639	1-1pr	3-1½pr
Dublin	1.1230-1.1279	1.1240-1.1254	33-47pr	35-77pr
Frankfurt	2.7919-2.7994	2.7919-2.7949	¾-½pr	2½-2pr
Lisbon	286.40-286.92	286.52-286.78	1-9pr	2½-1½pr
Madrid	237.58-238.06	237.58-237.90	73-63pr	163-164pr
Milan	2743.2-2770.9	2764.3-2767.4	97-71pr	271-185pr
Montreal	2.5947-2.6043	2.5947-2.5979	0.37-0.33pr	0.54-0.53pr
New York	1.6832-1.6852	1.6832-1.6840	0.153-0.132pr	0.440-0.412pr
Oslo	13.169-13.218	13.176-13.198	½-¼ds	¼-½ds
Paris	9.3630-9.3840	9.3653-9.3725	2½-2pr	7-6pr
Stockholm	13.572-13.624	13.582-13.573	¼-½pr	1-½pr
Tokyo	195.82-197.98	196.32-196.50	1½-1pr	3-2½pr
Vienna	19.640-19.684	19.642-19.664	¼-½pr	1-½pr
Zurich	2.2553-2.2635	2.2575-2.2605	1½-1pr	2½-2pr

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds

[illegible]

Australia	1.5974-1.6000
Austria	11.65-11.66
Belgium (Com)	34.18-34.19
Canada	1.5410-1.5420
Denmark	6.3062-6.3102
France	5.5583-5.5593
Germany	1.6572-1.6577
Hong Kong	7.7478-7.7488
Ireland	1.4980-1.4987
Italy	1641.0-1641.5
Japan	116.18-116.28
Malaysia	3.79-3.81
Netherlands	1.8675-1.8680
Norway	7.8190-7.8290
Portugal	169.83-169.96
Singapore	1.6470-1.6490
Spain	140.94-141.04
Sweden	8.0355-8.0430
Switzerland	1.3387-1.3392

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6859-1.6882
Australia dollar	2.6939-2.6976
Bahrain dinar	0.6280-0.6420
Brazil real*	2.0267-2.0292
China yuan	n/a
Cyprus pound	0.8220-0.8410
Finland markka	8.4225-8.5595
Greece drachma	462.75-473.55
Hong Kong dollar	13.0488-13.0583
India rupee	70.89-72.49
Indonesia rupiah	12384.00-13394.00
Kuwait dinar KD	0.5025-0.5135
Malaysia ringgit	6.3831-6.4206
New Zealand dollar	3.2098-3.2160
Pakistan rupee	80.65 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	6.0650-6.3000
Singapore dollar	2.7739-2.7789
S Africa rand (com)	9.9630-10.463
U A E dirham	6.1200-6.2560

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

[illegible]

3i	991	Marks Spr	9.655
ASDA Gp	11.686	Mepc	1.641
Abbey Nat	1.429	Nat Grid	6.294
Allnce & Leic	1.173	Nat Power	4.304
Allied Dom	5.172	NatWst Bk	2.689
Allied Zurich	4.033	Norwich Un	3.931
Amvescap	1.202	Nycomd Amr	1.865
AB Foods	933	Orange	4.153
Bk of Scot	2.082	P & O	1.394
BAA	2.437	Pearson	3.266
Barclays	5.773	PowerGen	1.166
Bass	2.544	Prudential	3.719
BG	6.755	Railtrack	1.485
B Airways	3.063	Reckitt Col	1.406
BOC	1.266	Reed Intl	3.475
Boots	1.386	Rentokil	5.437
BAe	3.634	Reuters	5.780
BA	3.395	Rio Tinto	1.081
Brit Am Tob	2.072	Rolls Royce	7.459
Brit Energy	2.343	Rd & Sun	4.569
Br Land	1.905	Ryl Bk Scl	2.037
BP	22.398	Safeway	3.992
BSkyB	5.426	Sainsbury	3.100
BT	9.222	Schroders	426
BTR	12.729	Scot & New	2.837
CGU	3.193	Scot Power	3.329
C&W Telecom	2.129	Securicor	878
Cable Wire	3.187	Severn Trent	1.939
Cadbury	3.653	Sears Trent	536
Carlton Cms	2.590	Shell Trans	17.023
Centrica	5.728	Siebe	10.734
Compass Gp	2.506	Smiths Ind	1.897
Diageo	7.147	SmKl Bch	9.166
EMI	3.125	Southern Elec	727
Gen Elec	3.324	Stagecoach	2.524
GKN	1.724	Std Chartd	7.132
Glaxo Well	4.745	Sun Life	437
Granada	2.681	TeleWest	4.876
GUS	3.100	Tesco	10.305
GRE	2.597	Thames W	643
ICI	1.700	Tomkins	3.574
HSBC	3.380	Unilever	5.461
Halifax	4.366	Utd News	1.051
Hays	2.102	Utd Utilities	1.613
Kingfisher	4.535	Vodafone	5.555
Ladbroke	3.754	WPP	4.795
Land Secs	738	Whitbread	1.073
Legal & Gn	1.525	Williams	1.374
Lloyds TSB	8.503	Woolwich	1.955
Lucasvarity	10.513	Zeneca	4.876

[illegible]

	Dec 15 midday	Dec 14 close		Dec 15 midday	Dec 14 close		Dec 15 midday	Dec 14 close
AEP	[illegible]	[illegible]	Eaton Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]	Oracle	[illegible]	[illegible]
AMP Inc	[illegible]	[illegible]	Edison Int	[illegible]	[illegible]	Oryx Energy Co	[illegible]	[illegible]
AMR Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]	Elect Data Sys	[illegible]	[illegible]	Owens Corning	[illegible]	[illegible]
AT & T	[illegible]	[illegible]	Emerson Elec	[illegible]	[illegible]	PPG Industries	[illegible]	[illegible]
Abbott Labs	[illegible]	[illegible]	Engelhard Corp	[illegible]	[illegible]	PNI Group	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

هكذا من الأصل

Net gains prove value of innovation

Harassing and promoting technological change will figure large when Peter Mandelson today unveils his Competitiveness White Paper. Yesterday, in announcing the next phase of the Government's Foresight Programme, Mr Mandelson talked about the need to build links between "business and Britain's excellent knowledge base, promoting the innovative ideas of today and turning them into the commercial successes of tomorrow".

Two events last week highlighted the need for innovative thinking as well as well-meaning rhetoric and we must hope that today's White Paper delivers.

The first was the discovery by British scientists of a new technology that appears to have the potential to revolutionise the accuracy and speed at which cervical smear tests can be carried out. That was marvellous news, particularly in a country with a poor record on this front. We then learnt that full clinical trials would be carried out in America because of lack of funds in this country. No doubt, after the trials, the technology will also be developed by a US company.

The disappointing truth of this episode was then highlighted by the arrival in London of Michael Porter, the Harvard professor who authored the best selling The Competitive Advantage of Nations in 1990. Dismissed in a letter to the Financial Times this week as "another management consultant peddling ill-considered analysis of Britain's economic problems", Professor Porter nevertheless demands to be taken seriously for the simple reason that he seems to have such an influence on new Labour.

Professor Porter offered up advice to top level officials from the Treasury and also met Mr Mandelson. One of his best known concepts is the nurturing of business "clusters" that interact with each other to produce new technologies and then share them to maximise collective productivity. He includes motor sport engineering companies gathered in the East Midlands or Britain's arts and media cluster centred on London among well-known British examples. In any case, Mr Mandelson now appears enthused by the idea and his White Paper will no doubt try to find ways of facilitating these innovative centres of excellence.

A recently published collection of essays on 21st century technologies by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development yields some fascinating insights into the challenges for governments around the world. An essay by Emilio Fontela of the University Autonoma of Madrid identifies three broad approaches to new technologies.

The Conventional Wisdom model is, by definition, most popular.



The market is basically allowed to function, globalisation continues, there is a move towards completely free trade. Employment creation is expected to be concentrated in knowledge, innovation and service sectors. The industrialised world acts as a technological centre, using its innovative skills to maintain a competitive trade position and leadership in technology transfers and foreign direct investment. Governments try to design policies to allow the market to work more efficiently. Growth remains at current levels.

In the Market model, government steps out of the picture with only a minimal "state" left to deal with such things as justice and defence. Companies from the industrialised world guard technologies to maximise their competitive advantage, the relationship between industrial and developing countries breaks down, the gap between rich and poor gets wider. Growth, however, is higher.

In the New Society model, politicians take power from the market. They redirect technology from assisting competitive economic processes to the more direct satisfaction of social needs. Technology transfer from the industrialised world is used to improve living conditions in the developing world. Global solidarity results but growth is low.

Predictably, the best mix of economic growth and social cohesion is found in the halfway house of the Conventional Wisdom model to which, no doubt, Mr Mandelson subscribes. The Market model is good for growth but bad for people and vice versa for the New Society approach.

There is, however, an exciting hybrid that is rampantly free market, beyond government control, at the cutting edge of technology but also collaborative, shared and aimed at improving the common good. What is this paragon? It is none other than the Internet.

Writing for the OECD, Meinolf Dierkes, Jeanette Hofmann and Lutz Marz of the WZB institute in Berlin use the example of the Internet to suggest a different way in which technology might be developed. The Internet, with its roots in academia, whose practice has always been to publish and share the results of its research, has been a story of intense co-operation between competitors. Its development has been informal, decentralised, public, driven by scientists and business interests. The Internet is unregulated, it takes no notice of the nation state as co-ordinator or intermediary, no company has a monopoly or "ownership" of any function or product.

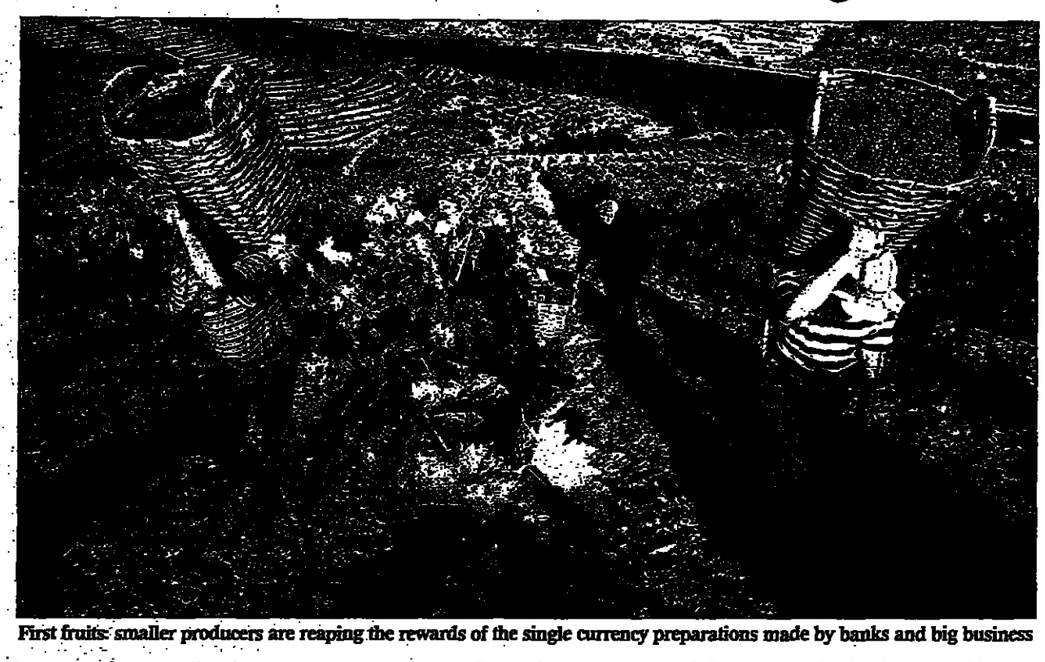
Whereas, the authors note, Deutsche Telekom is going to court to force its competitors to use and pay for its telephone lines, "the explicit goal of the Internet is to develop transmission standards that function with all available transmission technologies, independently of a specific proprietary status quo, market shares or patents."

The Internet is an example of how technology may develop most dynamically — and it has nothing to do with governments.

☐ *21st Century Technologies. Promises and Perils of a Dynamic Future is available from OECD Publications. Telephone: Paris 49104235. Fax: Paris 49104299.*

Portugal prepares to harvest benefits of monetary union

Alison Roberts finds out how a surprise qualifier is gearing up for the euro's launch



First fruits: smaller producers are reaping the rewards of the single currency preparations made by banks and big business

Portugal surprised sceptics from northern European countries when it qualified for monetary union with apparent ease, while France and Germany barely squeaked in. But even the most longstanding advocates of Portugal's bid for euro club membership acknowledge that there is a long way to go before its real economy catches up with its richer fellows.

With income per head even in relatively prosperous Lisbon just 85 per cent of the European Union average, it is misleading to suggest that Portugal's success in qualifying to adopt the euro means that it no longer needs to be bailed out with EU structural funds.

But government officials and independent economists are confident that business will have little trouble coping with the currency switch at the end of this month. And there are many people who feel that adjusting for the euro was just the kick up the backside that Portuguese business needed.

"I think companies view the euro as a challenge and an opportunity," said David Ferreira, co-ordinator of the commission set up by the Economics Ministry to help business to prepare for the change. "Some are having to restructure the way they function, but often that's something that they need to do anyway."

The commission has organised more than 200 seminars nationwide since its creation after EU leaders approved the list of euro zone members last May. It also helps local authorities to organise their own initiatives, and has an Internet site where business people are guaranteed an answer to e-mailed queries within 24 hours. More than 8,000 users have logged on in the past six months.

Portugal was among countries criticised in a European Commission report published last spring on how well member states were preparing for the change. But Portuguese officials claim that 80 per cent of the country's companies now know what will happen at the start of 1999 — a better percentage than is shown in the German *Mittelstand* (medium-sized businesses) for instance. What they are not so clear about is the less urgent matter of how and when euro notes and coins are to be introduced.

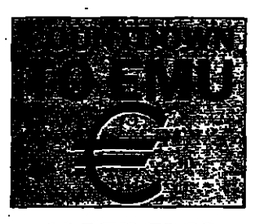
The country's banks, which in terms of technology and product development are among the most innovative in the EU, have played a pivotal role. Under a government-sponsored programme, they are providing soft loans to finance companies' purchases of the computer software and hardware needed for the switch. They are also excellent sources of information, according to Manuel Marques, chief financial officer at Efacec, an electrical engineering company based just outside Oporto, Portugal's second city.

Efacec is one of the most export-oriented of Portugal's home-grown companies, currently billing its foreign customers in dollars or marks. By the end of this year, it will be invoicing its Portuguese customers jointly in escudos and euros, and most foreign customers in euros. In particular, it aims to wean its customers in Asia off dollars. So long as a Portuguese company is not exporting dollar-denominated raw materials, Senhor Marques maintains, the switch to the euro is a great opportunity to reduce its exposure to currency swings. He thinks other exporters will take a similar approach. By the start of 1999, Efacec will have switched entirely to euros for internal accounting purposes (its published accounts will also be in escudos).

Famel-Fabrica de Produtos Metalicos, a firm in Agueda with big hopes for exports of an electric scooter that it has developed, sees the currency switch having little impact on its business. "The single currency in itself won't make a big difference," said Cenos Fonseca, a spokesman. "The market is growing because demand for non-polluting vehicles is growing. But the euro will make the marketing side easier."

At Atlantis, a glassware manufacturer based in Alcobaça, a small town north of Lisbon, the most important change so far has been an overhaul of its computer system. "Otherwise it was mainly a matter of giving information to our clients, to assure them that there won't be any change in our prices because of the euro," said Fernando Raposo Magalhães, a company spokesman. "That's one of the things people fear most."

The company has also made sure that its workforce has a good understanding of what is going to happen, and allayed fears that the currency conversion would affect salaries.



16 DAYS TO GO

One problem that Atlantis has not yet decided how to deal with relates to its shares, which are listed on the Lisbon stock exchange. When their nominal value is translated into euros, it won't be a nice round figure. With five million shares issued, Magalhães said that could cause problems.

All the same, exporters like Efacec and Atlantis are used to dealing with different currencies. More inward-looking companies may be perplexed by the switch. "Above all it's in the interior that there's a problem, because those are the areas where there is less information," admits Senhor Ferreira at the Economics Ministry.

But Eduardo Carvalho, of the Centre for Management Studies and Investigation at Lisbon's Universidade Lusiada, said that location is less important than the Government thinks. What matters is that those companies and industries that need to adapt will do so with little trouble. In fact, they already have, because they were forced to by the central bank's successful policy in recent years of keeping the escudo stable relative to the mark.

"Portugal has always had a very open economy, but with exports concentrated on a few sectors like textiles, cork and some machinery," Professor Carvalho said. "There has already been great change in such sectors, so I don't see this having big implications." He dismisses the concerns of some economists that the removal of currency barriers within the euro zone will make it increasingly difficult for Portugal's relatively poorly skilled labour force to compete with better-educated, more productive northern Europeans.

Half a dozen sectors such as textiles, footwear, cork and capital goods generate 75 per cent of exports and a similar share of jobs, he said. "Because of this concentration, Portugal will have to be competitive on the basis of those activities that are labour intensive," he says.

Only 2 per cent of Portugal's companies employ more than 100 people. Most of the rest — mainly family-owned "micro-enterprises" — are either in the sheltered service sector or survive by doing sub-contracting work for the half dozen "anchor" groups that act as the economy's locomotives. Senhor Marques agrees. "I think the companies that matter are ready," he said. He sees smaller companies switching to euros "a bit before" the introduction of notes and coins in 2002.

It is, paradoxically, the economy's peculiar — some might say antiquated — structure, dominated by a few powerful family-run groups, that will allow it to adapt fairly smoothly. "The microenterprises don't really do any planning, they just manage events," said Senhor Carvalho. "They will follow whatever the big companies do." That passivity is becoming less marked. Many small companies are now run by young entrepreneurs who lap up the growing number of management and financial newspapers and magazines.

But the consumption of printed matter by the public is by far the lowest in the EU, and awareness of economic issues is correspondingly weak. Last year, a gang of fraudsters tricked locals in a small town in the interior into giving up their escudos for euros in the belief that the switch was already under way.

Since then, several supermarket and hypermarket chains have started pricing products in euros as well as escudos. Over the next three years that should help customers to get a feel for the value of the euro.

But the Government's critics say its efforts still fall short of what is needed. The Finance Ministry recently said it wanted an advertising agency to produce an information campaign on the euro, to include two dozen television films as well as poster and press ads, for a total budget of 25 billion escudos (£88 million). Industry experts say it costs ten billion escudos to produce just one film. Portugal will have to live up to its reputation for productivity and low cost to achieve the ministry's target.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Soros's claims about the stability of sterling are wide of the mark

From the Head of the Policy Unit, Institute of Directors

Sir, I read the article "Soros hints at sterling attack" (Business news, December 14) with curiosity. Mr Soros's claim that sterling is likely to fluctuate wildly against the dollar once the euro starts is surely overdone.

If the UK and US economic cycles remain reasonably in kilter, then the pound will probably continue to be fairly closely aligned with the dollar. It may be that speculators will take swings at it. But, providing the authorities react calmly and "do nothing" by way of foreign exchange intervention to bolster the currency if it is falling (or vice versa), the speculators will probably soon tire of their game.

In recent history there have been two major market games with sterling. The first was in 1987-88 when the then Chancellor Nigel Lawson was targeting a maximum rate of three marks to the pound. When the pound exceeded the target rate, speculators sold sterling short on expectation of a lower currency. They then pocketed the profits as the Bank of England intervened to drive down the pound by vigorous selling (the foreign exchange reserves doubled in the period).

The second was, of course, in the build-up towards the pound's eviction from the exchange-rate mechanism in September 1992. It is widely reported that Mr Soros had more than a passing interest in, especially, the second event.

In both these cases, of course, the speculators were challenging fairly clear and narrow targets. If such targets don't exist and the pound is floating freely, the speculators will have nothing to get their teeth into. And, in the unlikely event of any significant systematic speculation, they would probably soon give up.

Yours faithfully,
RUTH LEA,
Head of the Policy Unit,
Institute of Directors,
116 Pall Mall,
London, SW1Y 5ED.

Backing sterling

From Mr R. W. Leon

Sir, You print on page one of your paper today (December 14) that George Soros warns he could target the pound if Britain stays out of EMU. I would take with a pinch of salt advice from someone who is reputed to have made a billion out of selling sterling forward. He might be looking for another billion in the future, for target can be read both ways — bull or bear.

It seems self-evident to me that by staying out of EMU and keeping our interest rates correct for our economy we shall have higher interest rates than the euro at least through next year. There is also a load of trouble awaiting the euro as socialist euroland considers its high unemployment levels. The monetary policy of the ECB may well be forced to take account of the political views of its socialist masters, whatever its remit might be officially announced.

In spite of Mr Soros's reputation, in 1999 I shall back sterling against the euro, and my guess is that the majority will prefer a higher interest rate and a safe haven from an uncertain new currency with all its troubles ahead. Perhaps even Mr Soros's hedge fund may target the pound in a different way from what Mr Soros hints now.

Yours faithfully,
R. W. LEON,
Glion House,
Montreux Court,
Little Switzerland, Douglas,
Isle of Man, IM2 6AF.

Unkind cuts

From Mr Trevor Openshaw

Sir, Many acres of paper have been devoted to exaggerating benefits of reducing interest rates, probably written by younger people who are in a borrowing situation and can have no idea what it means to have to supplement one's pension income by some interest on what may be life savings.

The long-term projection appears to suggest a rate of not more than 3 per cent, less than half of where we are now, but more in line with some European countries and a lot more than Japan, say!

Such a situation would probably wipe out millions of older people who have no long-term chance to control their position, or at least drive them on to benefits. However, there is another alternative.

Let us assume that the charge towards lower interest is to assist harmonisation with Europe. We should therefore be examining the position of the pensioner in other countries and, if my information is correct, their pensions will be found to be far in excess of our own government pension. So, in return for attaching ourselves to Europe, we pensioners (and prospective pensioners) should be awarded a similar higher level of pension, thus reducing the need to raise some income from savings.

No money, I expect, will be the answer. Well, the Government seems to be enthusing over the prospect of Euro-style tax rates, which, in addition to lower borrowings, will attract a lower level of interest, so let's start there shall we?

Yours faithfully,
TREVOR OPENSHAW,
Three Pines,
33 Ellesfield Drive,
Ferndown,
Dorset BH22 8QN.

Pulling Rank

MARK McQUATER is not a man to let the grass grow under his feet. Less than a year after joining Rank to run its Tom Cobleigh pubs, he is joining the Greenalls board as part of Lord Daresbury's brave new world.

McQuater, 37, who admits to a low boredom threshold, has been hired to run Greenalls's pub and restaurant division, where he will be responsible for developing brands such as Henry's Café Bars and Squares, which has a theatrical theme.

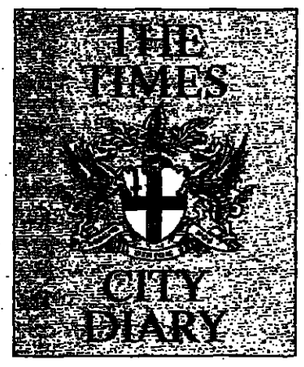
He has certainly accumulated plenty of relevant experience. After five years at Scottish & Newcastle, he did a three-year stint as managing director of JD Wetherspoon under the larger-than-life Tim Martin. He then became a director of NatWest Equity Partners, helping Nader Haghighi to finance a £56 million management buyout of the Parisa off-licence business from Greenalls.

But perhaps the most useful experience from his time as a venture capitalist came when NatWest acquired Albacom from the floundering Ferranti defence group in 1990. In a recent interview with *Spectrum* magazine, he said: "At Ferranti, I remember crossing picket lines to attend a board meeting with 300 chanting strikers outside. That prepares you for the pub trade."

NEWS reaches me of the passing of one of the leisure industry's more colourful characters, Nigel Kent-Lemon, whose death was announced yesterday, was a well-known figure in betting and gaming circles. He was chairman of City Clubs until its sale to Ladbroke for £50 million in 1994 and had been chairman of Lingfield Park racecourse since 1991 until it was subsumed into Arena Leisure last year. He was a non-executive director of Arena and a director of the Tote.



"That reminds me — have you bought a turkey this year?"



Bitter pill

JONATHAN POCKSON, the former finance director of Cortecs, has turned up again as chief bean counter of Microscience, a private vaccines firm backed by Dr Chris Evans and his Merlin Ventures team.

The Microscience announcement waxes on about Pockson's role in raising £70 million for Cortecs, the drugs development company. What it does not point out is that, despite his title, Pockson was never on the group board — part of the reason that Glen Travers was able to get away with having a company helicopter and hundreds of thousands of pounds of expenses.

Coincidentally, Cortecs announced yesterday that Travers has sold 100,000 shares. He must need the money rather badly. The shares have sunk to 10½p compared with 195½p at the start of the year.

Assure thing

A BIT of festive fun from Stakis Hotels, whose branded meetings package, called Assured Meetings, has been recognised by an award from the Hotel Marketing Association. (There's an association for everything these days).

I won't bore you with the details, but to celebrate the fact Anthony Harris, managing director, has sent a betting slip to more than 8,000 conference bookers that gives them a free 50p bet that it will snow in Glasgow (where Stakis is based) on Christmas Day. The catchline is: "If only we could assure that, too." (Geddit?). In case you were wondering, the odds are 10-1.

Browned off

FESTIVE cheer is the last thing on the minds of manufacturers. Even though the Budget is still four months away, 16 organisations representing almost 20,000 engineering and manufacturing companies have joined forces to lobby the Chancellor for measures to counter the slowdown in orders.

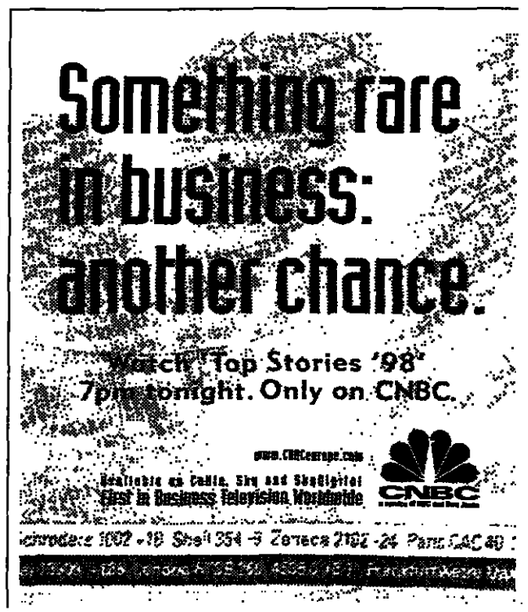
So if Gordon Brown is feeling a little bored with turkey sandwiches and Christmas pudding during the festivities, he will be able to settle into one of his comfy armchairs and read up on the delights of "pro-active, counter-cyclical measures to maintain investment" and calls for "a 100 per cent capital allowance for technology and engineering SMEs". I think I'll stick to Christams pud.

A Christmas card from Edelman, the PR consultancy, made me smile. On the front is a Calman cartoon with a very serious-looking Father Christmas being interviewed by a journalist. "I don't like to be called Father Christmas," he is telling the interviewer. "I prefer to be known as a 'festive spirit consultant'."

DOMINIC WALSH



Snow forecast: Anthony Harris is betting on a white Christmas



Yet another charity trying to get as much as it can out of people.

John Grooms works in partnership with disabled people to improve their quality of life, to maximise their freedom of choice, to respect their dignity at all times and to achieve a level of independence appropriate to their needs and desires.

Realising Potential

For information on how you can make the difference call 0800 13 88 111.

John Grooms
Working with Disabled People
Reg. Charity No. 212463

Late rally lifts equities

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
646	386	Allied Domecq	557½	+7½	4.5	14.6
412½	291½	Bulmer (HP)	326	+1	5.8	14.3
42½	7	Burn Stewart	14½	...		
795	432	Diageo	615½	-31½	3.2	18.6
900	685	Glenmorangie A	687½	...	2.6	18.6
325	225	Highland Distill	257½	...	4.5	11.8
243	115	Matthew Clark	242	...	6.7	8.2
59½	18½	Merrydown W	29			
2021½	725	SA Breweries†	965½	+28½	3.8	13.2

BANKS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1618½	893¾	ABN-AMRO	1168½	+21½	3.5	13.0
1390	860	Abbey Ntl	1138	+5	3.5	16.8
1032	585	Alliance & Leic	835	+3	3.4	15.7
1000½	587½	Allied Irish	932½	+10½	2.1	28.0
458½	299¼	Aus New Z	390½	+5	5.1	...
6075	3237½	Bank America	3637½	+5		
813	431	Bank Scotland	640	+6½	2.0	16.0
1986	822	Barclays	1175	-32	4.1	10.8
1332½	882½	Bk of Ireland	1217½	+10	2.3	20.0
2484¾	1565¾	Commerzbk	2453½	-9½	2.2	...
543½	218½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	253½	-21½	1.2	
5389½	2806½	Deutsche Bk	3484½	+225	1.8	
1206½	1134½	Espirito Santo	1159½	-3½	3.2	
591	112½	Fuji Bank Y	228½	-12	1.9	
2073	980	HSBC	1525	-7	4.3	14.0
2002	937	HSBC HK	1430	-19	4.8	13.1
1000	648½	Halifax	894	+5½	3.5	23.5
935	587	Irish Perm	867½	...	1.9	25.1
1080	565	Lloyds TSB	798	+21	2.9	22.9
928½	667	Nat Aust Bk	900½	-4½	4.3	
1244	694	Nat West	1026½	+8½	4.1	17.6
673	451½	Northern Rock	562	-4	2.5	18.5
1140	561	Ryl Bk Scot	942	+23½	3.3	13.5
1050	355	Stand Chart	676½	-3½	4.0	10.5
£164½	£164½	Wells Fargo	£164½			
439	306	Westpac	388½	+2½	2.0	...
400	300	Woolwich	342½	...	3.7	18.5

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

CONSTRUCTION

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
690	310	Br Energy†	642½	+11	2.9	30.4
517	231	National Grid†	487½	-½	3.2	23.9
700	470	National Power†	500½	-6	6.4	11.0
901	701	PowerGen	781½	+3	4.8	11.9
731	502½	Hydro-Elect	672½	+13	3.6	15.0
711	475	Scottish Power†	633½	+17½	4.2	15.3
740	467	Southern Elec	679	+14	4.4	17.6
725	522	Viridian	717½	...	3.9	14.4

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

[illegible]

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

[illegible]

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

PROPERTY

[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

[illegible]

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
908	411½	BT	841	-21	2.3	25.9
936	153	COLT Telecom	864	-2½		
863	467	Cable Wireless	706½	-13	1.9	25.2
716½	264	Cable&Wire Comm	530	-10		
1367½	252½	Energis	1,252	-21		
397½	95	Euro Telecomm	123	-1	3.0	16.6
620	239	Orange	604	-25		
573	286½	Securicor	477½		9.4	46.[illegible]
309½	69½	TeleWest	150	-2		
960	298	Vodafone	945	+42	0.3	58.[illegible]

TRANSPORT

[illegible]

WATER

1998 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
987½	780	Anglian Water	831	+9½	6.0	9.8
335	273	East Surrey	275½		5.6	8.5
1053	760	Hyder	763	-2	6.6	7.2
129½	115½	Hyder Gm Pf	123½		8.0	
775	645	Mid Kent Hldgs	645		6.1	
1145	864	Pennon	1106	-11	4.5	12.7
1175	665	Severn Trent	1017	-12	4.0	11.5
4005	3265	South Staffs	3700	-12	3.7	13.7
1230	811	Thames	1185	-11	4.2	12.1
972	658	Utd Utilities	829	-5	5.0	11.5
580	436	Yorkshire	568½	-3	4.4	11.3

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

[illegible]

BRITISH FUNDS

1998 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Grs red yld
SHORTS (under 5 years)						
100.02	100.00	Treas 7¼% 1998	100.0000	...	7.25	7.65
102.63	100.25	Treas 9¾% 1999	100.2530	-0.0065	9.48	6.35
106.31	101.75	Exch 12¼% 1999	101.7452	-0.0193	12.04	5.70
104.98	101.99	Treas 10½% 1999	102.0469	-0.0029	10.29	5.50
100.32	98.64	Treas 6% 1999	100.3215	-0.0142	5.98	5.48
106.46	103.62	Conv 10¼% 1999	104.4264	-0.0078	9.82	5.34
105.02	102.68	Conv 9% 2000	104.3602	-0.0063	8.62	5.22
105.79	102.22	Treas 8% 2000	105.7612	0.0310	7.56	5.36
103.84	101.81	Treas 8½% 2000	103.5122	-0.0063	8.21	5.12
114.83	110.58	Treas 13% 2000	111.7690	-0.0324	11.63	5.12
110.35	107.11	Treas 10% 2001	110.3114	-0.0291	9.07	4.98
106.10	100.71	Treas 7% 2001	106.0577	-0.0382	6.60	4.73
MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)						
107.62	101.42	Treas 7% 2002	107.5910	-0.0311	6.51	4.61
118.95	111.19	Treas 9¾% 2002	116.8970	-0.0439	8.34	4.73
113.99	106.58	Treas 8% 2003	113.9844	-0.0036	7.02	4.51
122.83	115.44	Treas 10% 2003	122.8129	-0.0124	8.14	4.57
114.41	110.80	Treas 11½% 2001-04	113.5711	-0.0545	10.13	5.06
98.98	90.17	Fund 3½% 1999-04	98.8609	+0.1691	3.54	3.68
125.10	118.53	Conv 9½% 2004	125.0962	-0.0025	7.59	4.57
112.01	101.84	Treas 6¾% 2004	112.0106	-0.0010	6.03	4.43
123.81	113.06	Treas 8½% 2005	123.7394	-0.0010	6.87	4.50
126.89	117.51	Conv 9½% 2005	126.8222	-0.0240	7.49	4.58
134.98	127.40	Treas 12½% 2003-05	134.8370	-0.0110	9.27	4.53
119.87	107.69	Treas 7¾% 2006	119.7372	+0.0145	6.26	4.53
120.76	108.97	Treas 7¾% 2006	120.6425	-0.0150	6.42	4.56
111.23	104.86	Treas 8% 2002-06	111.2141	-0.0141	7.19	4.72
125.92	119.81	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	125.9260	-0.0499	9.34	4.73
127.98	114.99	Treas 8½% 2007	127.8145	-0.0312	6.65	4.55
120.71	106.98	Treas 7¼% 2007	120.5383	-0.0052	6.01	4.45
135.94	121.18	Treas 9% 2008	135.7724	+0.0746	6.63	4.46
130.49	113.86	Treas 8% 2009	130.4929	+0.1472	6.13	4.41
116.15	98.44	Treas 6¼% 2010	115.8644	+0.1337	5.39	4.51
142.30	124.09	Conv 9% 2011	142.1130	+0.1641	6.33	4.57
144.84	125.04	Treas 9% 2012	144.3947	+0.1818	6.23	4.56
109.88	93.28	Treas 5½% 2008-12	109.8772	-0.1516	5.01	4.27
130.73	112.61	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	130.5966	+0.2440	5.93	4.63
LONGS (over 15 years)						
136.46	116.50	Treas 8% 2013	136.2106	+0.2536	5.87	4.60
141.24	118.45	Treas 8% 2015	140.7303	+0.3259	5.68	4.54
153.14	127.39	Treas 8¾% 2017	152.3646	+0.3629	5.74	4.56
150.23	121.52	Tr 8% 2021	149.2527	-0.4270	5.36	4.50
UNDATED						
77.19	55.09	War Ln 3½%	76.0843	-0.3342	4.60	
53.84	38.48	Treas 2½%	52.9200	-0.2263	4.72	
83.50	61.16	Consols 4%	83.0000	+0.3472	4.82	
INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:					5%	3%
206.40	194.71	Treas IL 2½% 2001	206.1736	-0.1915	2.07	2.51
207.67	192.34	Treas IL 2½% 2003	207.5829	-0.0873	1.94	2.21
133.97	124.28	Treas IL 4⅜% 2004	133.8544	-0.1128	1.89	2.11
231.96	206.54	Treas IL 2% 2006	231.9626	-0.1947	1.87	2.03
213.43	187.05	Treas IL 2½% 2009	213.4297	+0.2657	1.94	2.06
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209.51	175.38	Treas IL 2½% 2016	209.5063	-0.3212	2.01	2.09
208.24	170.21	Treas IL 2½% 2020	208.2427	-0.3441	2.02	2.09
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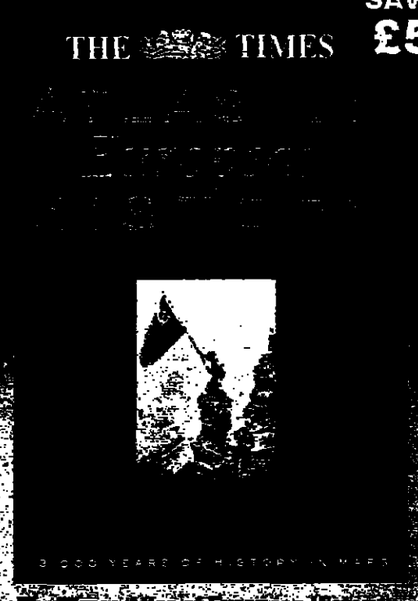
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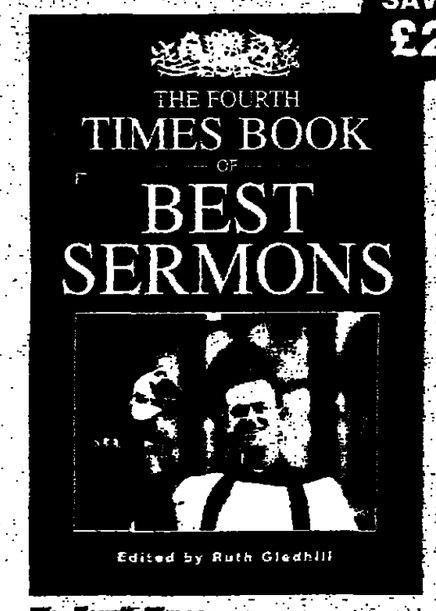


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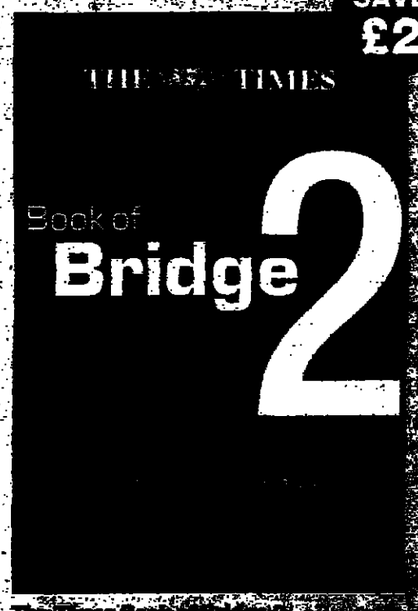
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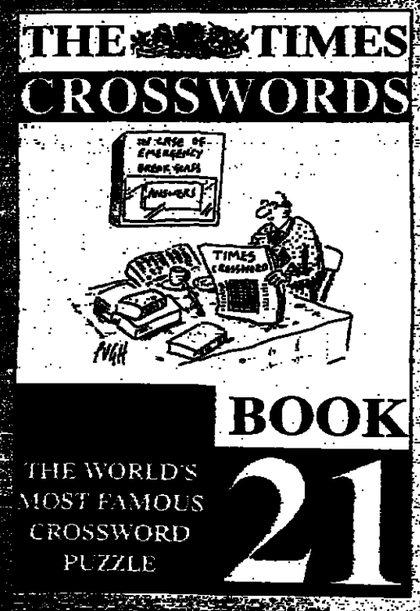


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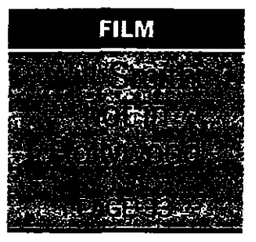


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Look back at the stars in our eyes

Since 1994 some 250 up-and-comers from all parts of the arts spectrum have been highlighted in our Great British Hopes feature. Here, **Nigel Cliff** tracks down those who have gone on to even greater things

ADRIAN SHERRATT



Eight of the best: from left, Julian Anderson, Julian Joseph at the piano, Katie Mitchell, Claire Martin, Eliza Carthy and Gillian Wearing; lying in front, Tom Hollander and James Purefoy

Trying to pick out the future stars of the arts world is rather like trying to tell a prize-winning painting from a pile of elephant dung: you never quite know which is the real thing. After five years and some 250 Great British Hopes, honesty compels me to report that just occasionally, we have got it wrong.

A few of our rising stars have turned out to be of the shooting variety. A cluster of others are still waiting for their chance to shine. And one, the singer Mark Morrison, is waiting for his release from a jail near Leicester, where he is serving time for affray.

But happily, it seems we have not entirely been flying a wayward kite: for an impressive number of our young pretenders are now firmly established as leading lights in their fields, themselves inspiring a new generation.

So with our birthday hats on our heads and our toy trumpets blowing well-earned praise, here is a selection of our newly elevated Great British Successes. Together, they tell a compelling tale of the inimitable strengths, and the inevitable frustrations, of the arts in Britain today.

> 'Rachel Weisz and Joseph Fiennes were early finds'

Among our very first choices was a group of young actors — Emma Fielding, Tom Hollander, Rachel Weisz, Joseph Fiennes and James Purefoy — all of whom had taken a few tentative steps on stage or the small screen. Today, you can hardly catch a film without running into at least a couple of them: Joe and Rachel in *Stealing Beauty*, Joe and Tom in *Martha, Meet Frank, Daniel and Laurence*, Tom and James in *Bedrooms and Hallways* — the last a "hip urban comedy" (says Purefoy) which won the Most Popular British Film award at the London Film Festival.

If you believe all the hoopla over the British film renaissance, you would think that here is our luckiest lot. Surprising then, that many hanker after the more traditional thrills of theatre. "The British film industry is still very ramshackle," says Tom Hollander. "Theatre is our forte."

Most of these risen stars agree that for British actors, the play's still the thing. Emma Fielding, star of the RSC's recent *School for Scandal*, insists it is the only real training. "Everything's so instant now, but I felt I had to serve some sort of apprenticeship. I still want to be doing this when I'm 60, and if you don't put in that work you've got nothing to build on."

Given that Fielding's only film experience involved "changing in the back of cars in freezing fields in Dorset in November", you could forgive a little bias. But even Rachel Weisz, who has made a career in Hollywood as well as Pinewood, is returning to her theatrical roots. When we spotted her in 1994, she was fresh from Coward's *Design for Living*, directed by Sean Mathias. "I'd like to end up at the RSC," she told us then, "and do some Shakespeare and Tennessee Williams."

Instead, she was lured away by a string of film parts, culminating in her biggest yet, the $80 million "action-adventure-romance" *The Mummy*. Weisz is proud of her films, but she is "less than ecstatic" about the way things have gone: "It got suddenly more gruelling last year, so I'm getting off the ride and going back to theatre." Her new play, Tennessee Williams's *Suddenly Last Summer*, again directed by Mathias, opens in April.

Compared to theatre, complains James Purefoy, "it's incredibly dull making films". But still better than television. Speaking from the set of his new film *The Wedding Tackle*, he recalls: "We spent eight months doing *A Dance to the Music of Time*, and it was over in four Thursday nights. I thought, my God, you spend so much time and care over something that has such a limited shelf-life."

Dull or not, even with three films on the way next year he admits there is still a lot to learn. "Film's so much about relaxation, about collaboration. You can often start off with a couple of very good performances, but that's because you don't know anything."

Learning about film, too, is the director Matthew Warchus. Warchus was our second Great British Hope back in March 1994, when we found him about to embark on his first RSC production. He went on to win numerous awards, including a Tony for the Best Play on Broadway with *Art*. Now Warchus is directing his first feature film — an adaptation of Sam Shepard's play *Simpatico*, starring Sharon Stone, Nick Nolte and Jeff Bridges.

"There is a lot of dishonesty in theatre that really upsets me," Warchus informed us in 1994. Is film any better? On the phone from a field in California during a break from shooting, Warchus laughs: "Now I realise that it's not just in theatre, it's in everything." He adds: "There's obviously a downside to dealing in a medium that has to cope with people's egos. But I still feel privileged to work in theatre."

His fellow director Katie Mitchell positively revels in the battle of egos. Unlike many of her peers, she has stayed with the theatre, and mainly with the RSC — though she has just quit as director of The Other Place, its third Stratford venue. "I possibly wasn't cut out to run a theatre," she admits. "It's a very hard conflict between the administrative demands and the creative demands. I'm very happy in a rehearsal room."

Mitchell's recent productions include *The Mysteries, Beckett Shorts* and *Uncle Vanya* for the RSC, and two operas with WNO. In 1994 she told us she had a long way to go before being good at her craft. Any progress? "The thing about the craft of directing is that it's almost impossible to do, and the thing that keeps me at it is that I can't do it. It's incredibly complicated as an activity, because it's human beings you're working with. The mutability of that extraordinary raw material is very, very hard to harness."

The odd vexation aside, all are keenly aware that they are the fortunate few, able to make a living from what they most love doing. The designer Es Devlin recently worked on the opening ballet at the new Sadler's Wells — "it felt like a bit of history" — and has just completed her biggest job yet, Pinter's *Betrayal* at the National, directed by Trevor Nunn. Devlin cannot believe her luck: "I wrote Trevor Nunn a letter and said, 'Dear Trevor Nunn, please come and see my show at the Bush', and he did, and that's how I got this job. It sounds a bit fairytale, doesn't it?"

> 'The Times helped Ian Bostridge to abandon history'

Yes and no, says the artist Gillian Wearing. Wearing was coming to attention in 1994 with her softly insinuating photographs and videos of deceptively simple "real-life" subjects. But life was hard, she told us then: "I have sold a few things but am finding it difficult. Everything is on a shoestring."

Winning the Turner Prize last year — closely followed by our other hot tip from the art world, this year's victor Chris Ofili, who was a Great British Hope in August 1997 — changed all that. Wearing insists that it came as a total surprise: "I never even thought I'd have been up for it, especially as it was only three years after I started."

Like Wearing, many of the young musicians we have profiled have made themselves a name for breaking down old boundaries and bringing new life to their chosen form.

Eliza Carthy, the 22-year-old folk singer and fiddler (or, inescapably, folkbabe) who was nominated for this year's Mercury Prize, has attracted an enthusiastic young audience for British folk music. "It takes more than one person and a nice photograph, but I hope to see a lot less definition between pop and traditional music, because both genres miss out if they ignore each other," she says, adding that "it's a very exciting time to be in music now."

Julian Joseph, the leading jazz pianist and composer, noted for his individual synthesis of West Indian and British folk influences, traditional jazz and classical music, agrees wholeheartedly. An inveterate experimenter, Joseph has just finished performing an improvised duet with the dancer Sheron Wray, "looking for ways to mirror dance with a jazz musician's 'vocabulary'", and recording an album of half-jazz, half-classical duets with Brazilian classical pianist Marcelo Bratke. He is nothing if not ambitious: eventually, he hopes to find a way to link all his concerns together in one unified concert.

Less ground-breaking, but no less talented, is Claire Martin, frequently acclaimed as the outstanding new British jazz voice of the decade. When we first featured her in 1994 she had just won the Rising Star award at the British Jazz Awards: the next year she picked up Best British Vocalist as well. Her fifth album, 1997's *Make This City Ours*, made No 1 in the Gavin chart (which tracks the most-played records on American radio) for three weeks. We noted in 1994 that cracking the all-important American market was "notoriously difficult — but Martin has the determination to get there in the end". She says she is "halfway there", and next year is mounting an all-out assault with a major tour.

Over on the classical front, four of our predictions stand out — one, the tenor Ian Bostridge, more than most for purely subjective reasons. In 1994 we dubbed him "an unusually promising tenor but also a gifted historian". The quibble was deliberate: he had not yet made up his mind which to go for. "*The Times* article," he says now, "was instrumental in me making my decision. That's when people noticed that I was doing a lot of singing, so it brought everything to a head." With two Gramophone awards and his Royal Opera debut following in short order, there has been no looking back. Indeed, he says it all seems unreal: "I worry that I'm fashionable at the moment, and maybe next week someone else will be and I'll be out on my ear."

Even more vertiginous has been the rise of the 21-year-old composer, pianist and conductor Thomas Adès. The four years since we featured him have seen Adès established as a dominant figure in contemporary classical music, with works such as the chamber opera *Powder Her Face* and the orchestral piece *Asyla* performed worldwide. Next up are commissions for the Royal Opera (to a text by James Fenton) and the New York Philharmonic. Whole festivals have already been devoted to this young composer's direct, accessible but uncompromising music.

The composer Julian Anderson has also made a big splash on the British musical scene since appearing on our pages in 1995. The stand-out was the "very, very big thrill indeed" of hearing his 1998 Proms commission, a 20-minute tone-poem called *The Stations of the Sun*, being performed. Anderson has just finished a ballet for the Royal Ballet's Dance Bites tour, and the London Sinfonietta has commissioned a second work, which he says builds on the idea of "rhythm and time viewed from many different angles — by an insect or a human being".

Perhaps most precocious of all is the conductor Daniel Harding. At 19 in 1994, Harding was one of our youngest Great British Hopes — still an undergraduate, despite having made his professional de-

> 'Chris Ofili completed a Turner double win for us'

but with the CBSO. The student life did not last long: he left after a year to be assistant to Claudio Abbado at the Berlin Philharmonic, still only 20. His debut with the orchestra followed at the 1996 Berlin Festival, the same year in which he became the youngest-ever conductor at the Proms.

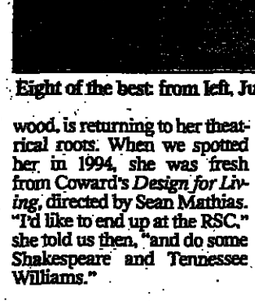
Next year Harding adds to his roster of orchestral appointments the musical directorship of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie, based in Bremen. He is hoping to stay put there for a few years.

Has his tender age proved a problem? "It's been a funny mixture of being close to people who've always been idols, and also trying to deal with being very much at the bottom of a not always very pleasant ladder." Inevitably, he adds, "these years are about coming to terms with the fact that nothing's as easy as you think it is."

Maybe so; but Harding and all our young stars have done their utmost to prove otherwise. So, sheer talent aside, is there any other common ingredient in their success? With reassuring British modesty, most claim they are unable to say, beyond the old chestnuts — persistence, sheer luck and a boundless enthusiasm for their profession. Tom Hollander, though, puts it all down to his nice head of hair. "I'm going to keep acting till I've lost my hair, then I'm going to direct." Direct what? "I wouldn't mind. I just thought of it yesterday. It's less to do with wanting to direct than what I'm going to do when I've lost my hair."

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament: PHILLIP EDWARDS



Age: 28.

Profession: Playwright.

Background: "I was born and raised in St Helens. I did four years at drama schools in Liverpool and Epsom before acting with black theatre companies and the English Theatre in Hamburg."

What's he written? His two-hander *Peg 51* has just won the Croydon Warehouse International Playwriting Festival. "It's an examination of racial identity in a multicultural society. It's funny and sad rather than polemical."

How did he move from acting to writing? " There was a lack of suitable black roles so I decided to write them myself. On the strength of something I wrote called *Natural Distance* I was accepted on David Edgar's MA course in playwriting studies at Birmingham University in 1996."

Buzzword? Multiculturalism. "Mainstream theatre has always been white and middle class. Black theatre imploded because it was too didactic. I wanted to write plays for a genuinely multicultural cast."

Still acting? "I'm not making a living as a writer — yet. So you might see me in the background of something on TV."

Thoughts on the state of modern theatre? "I think it's a good time to be a writer. It goes in cycles. We've had a vogue for gay plays, laddish plays, Irish plays. I don't think there is an agenda at the moment, which means there is room to manoeuvre. Theatres are looking for plays that make people think."

NIGEL WILLIAMSON



LISTINGS

Two Gentlemen in London

ARTS

MUSIC

Stirring Elgar with the LSO

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON



Kim Criswell sings yuletide songs in Glasgow

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA: *Tom Goodman-Hill and Dominic* Rowan play the estranged friends in Edward Hall's pleasing RSC production first seen at Stratford. Pit (0171-638 8891). Previews from tonight, 7.15pm.

CHAMBER MUSIC: Three superb musicians, pianist Christian Zacharias, violinist Frank Peter Zimmermann and cellist Heinrich Schiff join forces in an all-German evening of music by Beethoven, Webern and Brahms. Queen Elizabeth Hall (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.45pm. (S)

MESSIAH: Richard Hickox conducts the City of London Sinfonia joined by the Choir of Collegium Musicum 90 in a performance of Handel's masterpiece. Barbican (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.pm. (S)

QUATRE MAINS: Astonishing dance for hands created by Andrew Dawson, creator of *Thunderbirds*, FAB and Jozef Houben, director for The Right Size. Lyric Studio, W6 (0181-741 2311). Opens tonight, 8pm. (S)

MELVYN TAN: The acclaimed keyboard player gives a recital on the fortepiano of Mendelssohn's *Five Songs Without Words*, followed by works by Weber, Field and Schubert. Wigmore Hall (0171-935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm. (S)

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: Leonard Slatkin conducts the Philharmonia Orchestra and the City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus in a double helping of Beethoven. Soloists in the Choral Symphony include Rita Cullis and Christopher Maltman, with Till Fellner as soloist in the *First Piano Concerto*. Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333). Tonight, 8pm. (S)

GLASGOW: The Scottish Chamber Orchestra's Christmas concert offers seasonal songs by Broadway greats; Jerome Kern, Cole Porter et al. With sopranos Kim Criswell and Rebecca Caine, John McGlinn conducts. City Hall (0141-287 5511). Tonight, 7.30pm.

STRATFORD UPON AVON: Antony Sher plays the jealous Sicilian king in Gregory Doran's production of *The Winter's Tale*. Royal Shakespeare Theatre (01789 295623). Opens tonight, 7pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available ☐ Seats at all prices

■ **CHICAGO:** *Maria Friedman injects* new blood into the hit revival of Kander and Ebb's musical about murder and fickle fame. Adelphi (0171-344 0055).

☐ **DICK BARTON SPECIAL AGENT.** Journey back to the 1940s with the *famous old radio thriller, brought to* life by Phil Wilmott. Ted Craig directs. Warehouse, Croydon (0181-680 4060).

☐ **GOLEM:** David Burt, Gaye Brown in new musical by Sylva Freedman and Cathy Shostak telling of the man-made monster who runs amok. New End, NW3 (0171-794 0022).

◪ **JESUS MY BOY:** Tom Conti in John Dowie's short comedy giving *Joseph's side of the story. Unlikely to* be theologically sound. Apollo, W1 (0171-494 5070).

◪ **THE SNOWMAN:** The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters soar over the audience in Bill Alexander's joyful production. Peacock, WC2 (0171-863 8222).

☐ *THE KING AND I:* Whistle a happy tune with Phil Wilmott's Steam Factory production of the feelgood Rodgers and Hammerstein musical. BAC (0171-223 2223). (S)

☐ **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** Mampat Donovan plays the unnerving Sister in her American comedy hit, co-written with Vicki Quade, cowing the audience with old-time Catholicism. Jermyn Street (0171-287 2875)

☐ **ARABIAN NIGHTS:** Ali Baba, Sinbad and lesser known tales adapted and directed by Dominic Cooke. Young Vic (0171-928 6363).

◪ **CINDERELLA:** Neil Bartlett and the Shockheaded Peter team stage a wonderful version of Angela Carter's panto. Magic provided by Paul Kieve. Lyric, W6 (0181-741 8701/2311). (S)

☐ **BETRAYAL:** Pinter's profound analysis of adultery among friends, moving backwards and forwards through time. Trevor Nunn directs Anthony Calf, Douglas Hodge, Imogen Stubbs. Lyttelton (0171-452 3000). (S)

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

Geoff Brown's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

THE BOYS (18): Uncomfortable and *powerful Australian drama, with* David Wenham as the prisoner whose homecoming sparks violence. With Lynette Curran, Tom Collette. Director, Rowan Woods.

THE MASK OF ZORRO (PG). Rousing, old-style swashbuckler, with *Antonio Banderas as the bandit who* helps Anthony Hopkins avenge a family tragedy. With Catherine Zeta Jones. Director, Martin Campbell.

THE PARENT TRAP (U): Amiable if overlong escapist family comedy, with Lindsay Lohan as the identical twins trying *to unite their divorced* parents. With Dennis Quaid and Natasha Richardson.

PLAYING GOD (18): David Duchovny's discredited doctor becomes a mobster's in-house surgeon. Lively enough treatment, but ambitions stay unfulfilled. With Timothy Hutton. Director, Andy Wilson.

THE TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE (18): *Youngsters in* Texas stumble into a loony family with a taste for human meat. Notorious but comparatively mild horror classic of 1974

CURRENT

BABE: PIG IN THE CITY (U): Everyone's favourite talking pig faces the torments of the hostile city. Grotesque, misguided sequel to the hit film. With Magda Szubanski.

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE (U): Warm your heart's cockles with Frank Capra's tribute to homely American *values, with James Stewart as the* doubting do-gooder driven to desperation.

ON CONNAIT LA CHANSON (PG): Refined relationship comedy, with a marvellous cast and lip-synched snatches of popular songs. Alain *Resnais directs.*

RUSH HOUR (15): LA and Hong *Kong cops join forces on a kidnap* case. Routine fare, enlivened by Asian legend Jackie Chan and motormouth comic Chris Tucker.

OUT OF SIGHT (15): Escaped convict George Clooney finds himself *falling for the federal marshal Jennifer* Lopez on his tail. Dazzling, inventive version of Elmore Leonard's novel.

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY (U): Revival of MGM's delicious comedy about a socialite wedding that comes unstuck. With Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant and James Stewart.

Master of all moods

CONCERTS

Evgeny Kissin
Wigmore Hall

Evgeny Kissin's recitals routinely sell out the largest auditoriums, so it was hardly surprising that his appearance at the intimate Wigmore Hall should have been one of the season's hot tickets. But since intimacy is something that has often been missing from Kissin's showy performances, the way in which this all-Chopin concert brought out the best in the twentysomething "Wunderkind" was a cause for rejoicing.

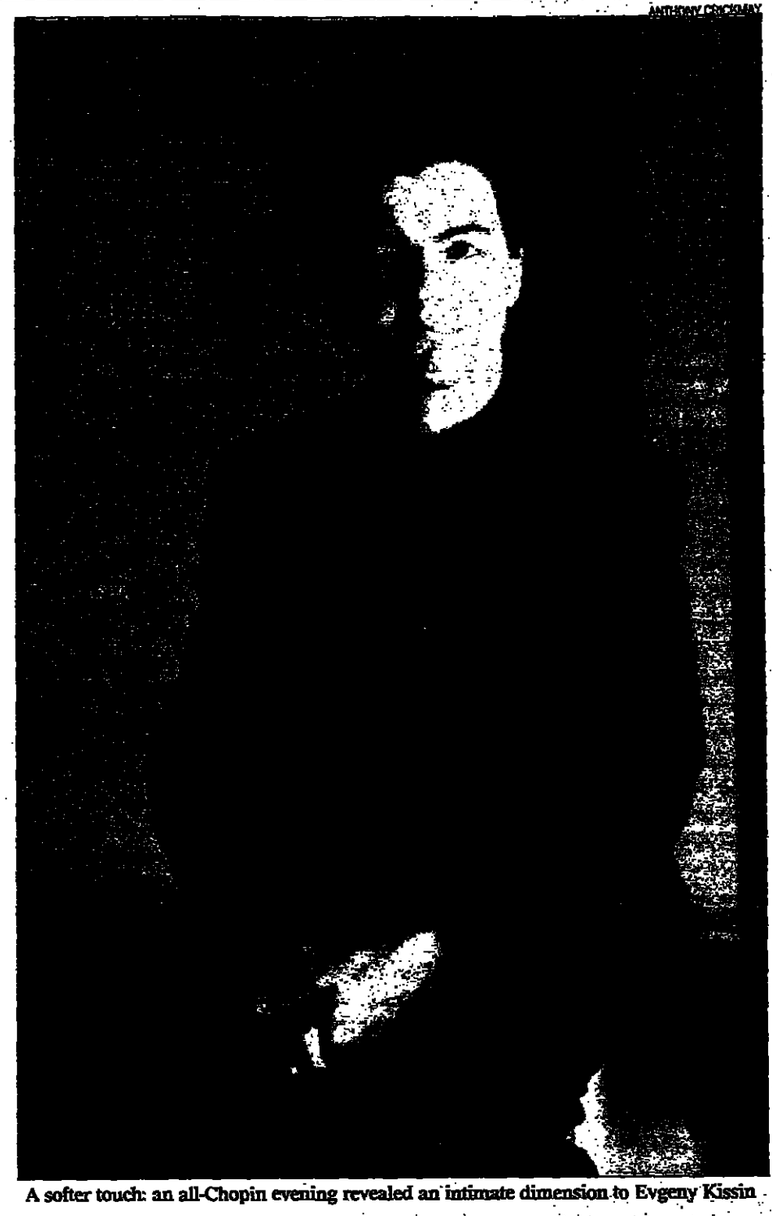
It was also good because the occasion, a tribute to Lord Kissin of Camden given in aid of the Yehudi Menuhin School, signalled a deeper musical maturity than Kissin has ever shown before. His approach to the 24 Preludes was thoughtful and poised, even if his heroic style of pianism resulted in some heavy-handedness.

But who could resist the way he launched himself headlong into the first prelude? Or the manner in which he captured the contrasting, inner stillness of succeeding pieces? Kissin proved himself a master of mood, keeping the audience spellbound in the more introverted preludes, such as the B minor with its "cello" line, and the nocturne-like. F-sharp major. The stormy numbers were hugely impressive, but often it was the in-between effects that proved most special of all, like the G major's suggestion of spring torrents and the rippling breezes of the F major piece.

Coming after the interval, the Barcarolle was powerfully atmospheric, free, yet faithful to the notes. The highly embellished Venetian gondola song was never far below its swirling surface, and the performance caught all the mystery of this late masterpiece.

With one of the most staggering techniques in the business, Kissin was able to give an unfettered performance of the Sonata No 2 in B flat minor. The stormy opening gave way to a passionate first movement, which in turn led towards a biting Scherzo. Kissin allowed the lyrical middle section space to shine through, just as he did the tranquil yet sorrowing centre of the Funeral March. Muted colours here were more than matched by an unusually ghostly finale. If the first two encores sounded a little one-dimensional, the main body of this programme, delivered with idiomatic richness, represented Kissin at his most musicianly.

JOHN ALLISON



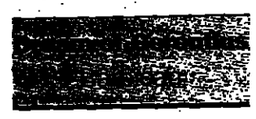
ANTHONY CROWLEY

A softer touch: an all-Chopin evening revealed an intimate dimension to Evgeny Kissin

I'm not hearing voices

Colin Davis brought his acclaimed Elgar series with the London Symphony Orchestra to a stirring climax on Sunday night with an intensely spiritual reading of *The Dream of Gerontius*. Over the years his handling of scores such as this has become more spacious, less urgently pressing. The Prelude to Part I gave notice of this new vision with grandly sculpted phrases, filled with rich, sonorous tone by the LSO strings. Where a more prosaic conductor might observe the metronomic beat more rigidly, Davis takes deep breaths and sinks slowly into a new phrase, the tone sometimes registering seconds later than expected.

He also knows exactly how to judge the myriad little surges and hesitations that characterise Elgar's score: the main tempo is always clear and the



return to it has a natural feel. With immaculate, responsive playing from the LSO, Davis was able to weave an orchestral fabric of infinitely subtle detail.

The scene was set for an exemplary performance of the oratorio. Alas, the American tenor Robert Dean Smith was not the man to bring it about. For a singer whose repertoire encompasses Heldentenor and roles by Wagner, Verdi, Puccini and Strauss, Smith's tone was surprisingly underpowered. He rarely sounded comfortable in the highest range (he switched from baritone to tenor some nine years ago) and quasi-operatic passages such as *Sanctus fortis* failed to ring out with the confidence required.

To make matters worse, he never seemed to inhabit the role from within: Gerontius's ecstasy and tribulations in Part I, at least, passed him completely by. Occasionally in Part II there was a flicker of inspiration, and the climactic cry "Take me away!" (prepared by Davis with an apocalyptic crash on the percussion) was his finest moment.

Sara Mingardo, as the Angel, hasn't an exceptionally large voice either, and she was in danger of being covered once or twice by the orchestra. But she brought to the part an unmistakable sincerity and tenderness that more than compensated. Jonathan Summers can always be relied upon to give 105 per cent, and his *Angel of the Agony* was powerfully and intensely projected. The LSO Chorus, prepared by Stephen Westrop, made electrifying contributions in both angelic and demonic guise.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Charmless generosity

BBCPO/Tortelier
Manchester

Conductor appearances can be as deceptive as any. The severely restricted movements with which Leif Segerstam conducted the *Helsinki Philharmonic in Birmingham* a couple of weeks ago were to do not so much with technical economy as, it has since turned out, a painful back. Either way, the look of the performance was quite different from the sound of it. Similarly, although Yan Pascal Tortelier looked most uncharacteristically, as though he might be conducting a not very serious rehearsal in the second half of his concert with the *BBC Philharmonic in the Bridgewater* Hall, the orchestra played as though he were doing far more than very correctly beating time.

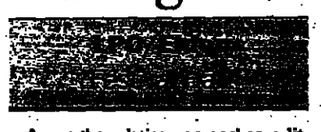
Since his public was vociferous in its approval of what was actually an authentically expressive account of Rachmaninov's Second Symphony, little harm can have been done by an apparently grudging conducting performance. With the vision off, so to speak, the interpretation was generous in colour, voluptuous in line, and dramatic in effect. Besides, it will surely not be long before the BBC Philharmonic's principal conductor has another opportunity to throw himself wholeheartedly into a large-scale Romantic work like this — and, when it is over, to offer a smile to an audience that has accumulated for a variety of reasons but not least for the engaging qualities of the Tortelier personality.

Actually, Mikhail Rudy was no more demonstrative in Prokofiev's Second Piano Concerto in G minor in the first half of the concert. He did, on the other hand, have every right to be: in a work that touches on the extremes both in keyboard technique and in musical characterisation he fell short of none of them. His performance of the overwritten first-movement cadenza, though presented with a head-down determination not to swagger, was phenomenal, above all in justifying its extraordinary length and making its structural point. Only Prokofiev could have made such demands on the soloist within minutes of the innocent opening of the work and in a context that leads in so many other directions before the end of it.

In an evening generally lacking in charm Rudy's choice of a delightfully playful Prokofiev prelude was a timely encore inspiration.

GERALD LARNER

Ritual delights



As the solstice approaches, a little show of respect for the Sun God is no bad thing, and the London Philharmonic was clearly taking no risks. As part of its continuing Rimsky-Korsakov Festival, Mark Elder raised his baton for that stomping *Round Dance of the Millet* which opens Rimsky's opera *May Night*. The London Philharmonic Choir might have been vocally somewhat lightly shod, but the curtain was well and truly raised on what was to be a particularly beguiling evening.

Chagall himself could have painted the backdrop for the duet between Levko and Hanna which came next in this little *May Night* suite. The LPO's leader Joakim Svenheden fiddled sublimely as the lithe tenor Vsevolod Grivnov and Marianna Tarasova's lustrous mezzo-soprano sang of their love, and as two stellar flutes and pizzicato cellos opened up the night sky. Paata Burchuladze, the Georgian bass, was cast as the ridiculous old Mayor, and his cry of "Hanna! Hanna!" gurgled lecherously in the throat in a performance as resonant of character as of voice.

The *May Night* excerpts were separated from Rimsky's suite from his penultimate opera *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh* by Stravinsky's *early Scherzo fantastique*. With violin bows beating like a humming-bird's wings, and flashes of woodwind trills glinting off harp and celeste, this is a thrilling trial run for *The Firebird*. And one that was approved by Stravinsky's teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov, from whose *City of Kitezh* he had clearly picked up a tip or two.

The Stravinsky showed Rimsky's colours caught in a prism. Rimsky's own palette, at its most rich and rarefied in *Kitezh*, was relished by Elder and the LPO who drew gold domes of superbly focused brass playing out of the clouds for the final apotheosis.

This transformation scene would have been the obvious place for the concert to end. But the chorus, now joined by the New London Children's Choir, had to be given something else to do, and Mussorgsky had to have a look in. His summer rituals rang out of the Satanic invocations of *St John's Night on the Bare Mountain* here, somewhat perversely, in Shebalin's *Sorochintsy Fair* version rather than in Rimsky's own orchestral adaptation.

HILARY FINCH

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ARTS

TOMORROW
Movies for children

From rap star to Hollywood leading man, Will Smith can do no wrong. **Martyn Palmer** met him


ANDREW BRUSSO/OUTLINE

With *Independence Day* and *Men In Black* on his CV, Will Smith has starred in two of the biggest films ever. "It feels a little weird," admits the star of next week's *Enemy of the State*

Give this man your vote

It would be tempting to believe that Will Smith is serious when he tells you that he can achieve anything if he sets his mind to it. Blessed with a formidable amount of self-belief and a career that has progressed from rapper to one of the most successful movie actors in the world — he is the star of two of the most popular films to date, *Independence Day* and *Men In Black* — Smith is enjoying the fruits of incredible success.

When he plays golf, his partner is often Tiger Woods. Bill and Hillary — that's Mr and Mrs President — sent a charming note to congratulate him on the birth of his second son earlier this year. And Hollywood titans such as the producer Jerry Bruckheimer compare him to Tom Cruise.

Will Smith is a winner, you see. He will tell you this himself without a trace of irony. "I just hate to lose," he says. "My ego forces me to work hard and if you work hard and you work harder than the next guy you are going to win. It's one of those inevitable things."

In cold print, some of Smith's remarks can seem a little, well, over the top. In America recently, for instance, he told one interviewer: "I feel like I could be President of the United States. People laugh, but if I set my mind to it, within the next 15 years, I would be President."

Smith also has a great sense of humour, by all accounts. And when you meet him, holed up in a London hotel to promote his latest film, the high-tech thriller *Enemy of the State*, you fully expect him to tell you that the quote was just a bit of fun. Which he does. Up to a point.

"You know, I say jokingly to my friends that I think I could be the President but there is a side of me that really believes I could win the presidency of the United States.

"I have opinions and I follow public policy and I have strong views about the way that the country should be run. And I have really specific attitudes about things that are really important to a lot of people. I feel like I would be a good President."

This all sounds rather fanciful from this side of the Atlantic. After all, we are not just talking about an actor becoming a President (not so fanciful) but a black actor in a country where there has never been a serious African American contender for the highest office. But examine the Will Smith Phenomenon a little closer and you will see that's not so fanciful either.

Smith is extraordinarily popular in the United States. He is Denzel Washington, Eddie Murphy and Michael Jordan rolled into one. He is cool and he is nice, and he has the kind of crossover appeal that drives the marketing men wild. And if the sheer force of celebrity appeal can make up for lack of political credentials, then Smith may well be right in his boast.

> 'If I set my mind to it I'd be President in the next 15 years'

He may be a rapper, but he is the acceptable, wholesome face of rap. While others write lyrics about drive-by shootings and underage sex, Smith raps about love and family — his recent American hit *The Two of Us* was about his relationship with his son. And the fans love it: his latest album, *Big Willie Style*, has sold more than any of his previous records.

In conversation Smith even talks of discipline, of the need to work hard and the desire for a strong family unit. The oldest of four children born in Philadelphia, Smith was raised in a blue collar household where discipline was everything. His father, who had served in the US Air Force, was an engineer and expected his children to conform to his ideals of family life. Smith believes that helped him no end.

"I grew up in a military household, really disciplined; we had to roll our underwear up in the drawers, along with our socks, and put them in neat little lines. There were hospital corners on the beds, you know. Learning that level of discipline and a commitment to doing things right is going to help you to win."

As a teenager, Smith's first hint of rebellion came when he began to be drawn to the then underground world of rap. It could have been a sticky time when he declared to his parents, at the age of 17, that he didn't want to go to college, preferring instead to take a chance with his music with his close friend Jeff Townes. Smith called himself The Fresh Prince and Townes was known as DJ Jazzy Jeff.

"They gave me a year to go out and try this whole rap thing and within that year we recorded our first album and won a Grammy, so it was on from there."

They would go on to win three Grammys and three American Music Awards, and sell millions.

In the next stage of his fairytale career, Smith met and impressed Quincy Jones so much that the musician and television producer decided to create a sitcom for Smith called *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*.

"I was 21 and I had never acted before," recalls Smith. "They had looked at music videos and stuff, and just assumed that I could do it, that I was this great actor. On the first day I was scared stiff. But when I feel like that I want to attack the fear. And that's been one of the big factors in being successful in things that I've done — I always attack them."

During summer breaks from *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*, which ran for six very successful years until 1996, he made films. He played a bisexual hustler in *Six Degrees Of Separation*; there were small roles too, in *Made In America* and *Where The Day Takes You*. But it was Jerry Bruckheimer who really saw his big screen potential. The man responsible for hits such as *Top Gun*, *Beverly Hills Cop* and *Crimson Tide* declared that he had found a star who would be as "big as Tom Cruise" when he cast him in the buddy flick *Bad Boys*, the surprise hit of 1995.

From there, Smith could do no wrong. In 1996 he played an Air Force pilot in *Independence Day*, and in 1997 he starred with Tommy Lee Jones in the blockbuster comedy *Men In Black*. The incredible success of these films (both are in the top ten biggest earners of all time) has meant that he now commands $20 million per picture and can pick and choose from the very best scripts around. The success he now enjoys is, he admits, a little overwhelming.

"It definitely feels a little weird sometimes. The combination of *Independence Day* and then *Men In Black*, that was just rare. It was an amazing thing and once in a while I sit around and go 'Damn! That Will Smith guy is me.'"

His latest film, which reunites him with Bruckheimer, is *Enemy of the State*, directed by the Briton Tony Scott. A fast-paced thriller, it has done very well in America and has proved that Smith can move away from the more comedy-based roles where he has made his name.

In *Enemy of the State* Smith plays a young, successful lawyer, Robert Clayton Dean, framed for a murder he did not commit by a corrupt intelligence officer (Jon Voight), who uses every state of the art resource at his command to dismantle the attorney's life and then to kill him.

"It was a little tough stepping out to the front of a film like this because I'm used to having all the bells and whistles to make a big movie, aliens and spaceships and explosions, and this film is really minus all of those things.

"It's not a comedy and my natural instincts are comedic. It's not a buddy film; it's a dramatic role and my character is in 90 per cent of the scenes. The weight was on my shoulders more than ever before. And that's not just physically exhausting but emotionally exhausting, too. But I enjoyed it."

The film is further proof that Smith now enjoys exalted status as the leading black actor of his generation. He does not, however, see himself as a black role model.

"I know that there are a lot of people who watch my career. I know that there are a lot of people who pay attention to things that I say and things that I do. But for the most part I try to make music and films that my family would be proud of, and that is really the only litmus test that I use."

● *Enemy of the State is released on Boxing Day*

Beauty and the beast divided

THEATRE

The travelling freak show may be a thing of the past, but as a society we are more fixated with notions of physical perfection than ever before. Perhaps perfection is the wrong word, for what we really aspire to is a kind of physical conformity, a slowly changing ideal which dictates notions of beauty, normality and ugliness. But for all this, we know better than to victimise those who do not conform; we are right-on and sophisticated; unconventional appearance is no longer stigmatised, right?

Strathcona Theatre Company begs to differ; a company of eight learning-disabled actors, its latest production **id** (at the Young Vic Studio) uses the setting of a Victorian sideshow to explore just how little has changed in the assumptions made about disability.

When twin boys are born to a wealthy engineer, he becomes disturbed by their difference in appearance and behaviour; in his eyes, while the one is beautiful, the other is "an aberration, a freak of nature". Concerned about what the presence of such a child will do to his reputation, he places it in the care of another family. The boy, Malady, is swiftly exploited by his foster family, which sells him to Frankie Roquespeare, a circus ringmaster specialising in "fabulous freaks of nature". Malady soon learns that life as a "freak" is one of exploitation and hardship, but he also discovers camaraderie and even love among the other performers who become his "family".

While there are occasional moments of heavy-handed didacticism — "We're not lunatics, we're human beings; within these bodies we feel like everyone else" Malady says at one point — the actual message of the play is strongly communicated by the highly effective characterisation.

Pius Hickey and Sheldon Antoine are particularly engaging as the twin brothers Malady and Beau, who unknowingly echo each other's loneliness and isolation; one for being too ugly, the other too pretty. There is comedy among the pathos, however, particularly from Nicola Smith as the drunken Mrs Scummage.

Interestingly enough, while promoting a greater understanding of disability in general, the company plays both deafness and alcoholism for laughs. It is a fine illustration of just how easy it is to fall back on to our assumptions, however vigilant we may be. Beyond this however, *id* is a slick and thought-provoking piece of theatre by a brave and important company.

As the official Promised Band, **Guns 'n' Moses** (at the Hampstead Comedy Club) are gearing themselves up to be the most important development in Jewish rock since Mount Sinai. With a lineup consisting of Axl Rosenberg, Rabbi Williams, Tel Aviv and Keith Arafat (they let him play drums because it keeps him occupied), they deliver a set of stomping synagogue standards. Highlight of the night is *Stairway to Heaven*, recently discovered in the original Hebrew.

A Jewish heavy metal band is the kind of comedy concept that sounds great on a boozy Saturday evening. In front of a disturbingly sober crowd in a tiny basement, however, things proved more difficult. But the problem with Guns 'n' Moses is a little more profound than having to wake up a dead room. For a start they are condemned to walk a fine line between clever but dangerously esoteric jokes about Judaism and material suitable for more general Gentile consumption. In the end they settle for an uncomfortable mixture of the two, which leaves various parts of the audience scratching their heads while those about them titter shyly.

There is also a frustrating haphazardness to the performance style; it's hard not to feel that it could have been so much funnier if this bunch of guys wearing crummy wigs had actually pretended to take themselves seriously instead of slipping out of character at the slightest excuse.

HETTIE JUDAH

Big and topping

OPERA

BERTRAM MILLS may no longer be in town, but there is a most respectable circus up at the Wells in *The Bartered Bride*. In Act III the band rolls on with jugglers, tumblers, Red Indians and a man on stilts while an Esmeralda does her highwire act, the top half of the body carefully obscured by the proscenium.

"Now's the time for fun and laughter" they used to sing when Smetana's opera was performed in English at the Garden. And that is the keynote of Francesca Zambello's production for the Royal Opera. It is a pleasure to have a staging reflecting the sheer verve of the music rather than probing into the opera's darker corners, real or imagined. Alison Chitty's spanking new barn could have stepped straight from *Oklahoma!* and the orchestra even continues playing, West End style, during the curtain calls. But the costumes are strictly Bohemian and the ample use of bright green subtly suggests the unseen fields that lie beyond, while Wolfgang Göbbel's amber lighting evokes the harvest being celebrated.

Into this handsome setting steps a completely new second cast to challenge the first one, described by Rodney Milnes earlier this week. At its core is the Marenka of Bulgarian soprano Zvetelina Vassileva. She has an opulent Slavic voice, at times recalling Gabriele Benackova, the best of recent Marenkas. The sound was a bit hard at the start, but then she is something of a hard nut among these jolly farming folk. She softened it, though, beautifully in the third act when Marenka looks to be forced to marry the nincompoop, Vasek.

In that role Timothy Robinson, beribboned and knickerbockered, is outstanding. Vasek becomes a gangling teenager, quite besotted with Esmeralda (Yvette Bonner, elegant legs and small voice) and the idea of circus life in general. Goodness knows what happens to him when the big top goes out on the road. Christopher Ventris's powerfully sung Jenik has clearly seen plenty of outdoor life already. Kristinn Sigmundsson plays the marriage broker, Kecal, as one of opera's loveable charlatans, a close cousin of Donizetti's Dr Dulcamara. *Elisir* and the *Bride* have more than a bit in common. The Covent Garden orchestra under Bernard Haitink was in superb form. With fine all-round ensemble the company cannot be allowed to spend next year in darkness.

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THE TIMES

Happy Christmas from all the Crème de la Crème team.

Over the Christmas period the Crème section will not be appearing on both the 23rd and 30th of December.

However, we will be back to the normal supplement on 6th January.

For any information during this period please call 0171 680 6801 or fax on 0171 782 7899.

Crème de la crème

Crème de la Crème

Pride fuels a steady climb to the top for jack of all trades

Jennai Cox charts the rise of a woman who used failure as a spur to ultimate success

The rejection note that landed on Jackie Grant's doormat in 1978 simply read: "You are not sufficiently qualified to join the Institute of Qualified Private Secretaries." In October this year, two decades later, she began a three-year term as IQPS national chairwoman.

Shortly after finishing a Scottish National Higher Diploma in secretarial studies with languages, Ms Grant made her first attempt to join the group which she thought would help her career. She had needed her mother's encouragement to complete the course after failing the first-year exams.

"I had a job offer at the local police station in Edinburgh," Ms Grant says, "but my mother said I could get a better one if I was qualified." Applying herself more, she finished the diploma and, at 21, started her first job with the internal temping agency at the BBC in London, working wherever secretarial support was needed and eventually landing a permanent post with a drama series producer.

> 'Everyone thought I was mad with the recession beginning'

"It was in the days of the original *Pride and Prejudice* and the producer was great fun to work with," she says. "We got on well and still keep in touch."

When her boss ran out of projects Ms Grant, looking for another opportunity within the BBC, returned to Edinburgh to work in radio. "Because it was a smaller medium, there was more chance to get involved and I spent much more time in the studio," she says.

Eventually, though, Ms Grant became conscious that she was still typing scripts on stencils when most of her contemporaries had progressed to electric typewriters. It was, she says, time to leave public broadcasting: "It got to the stage where I could see no career development and was scared of being left behind." After considering a move into floor management at the BBC, she ended up accepting a secretarial job that involved just that.

Working for the manager of an exhibitions company, Ms Grant was left to run the event once the exhibitors had booked their space. "I would walk around on the day with a walkie-talkie, co-ordinating the show and talking to all our clients," she says. "The buzz of building it up from scratch was very similar to working in TV or radio."

But the prospects for secretarial staff became limited and after two years, Ms Grant left. She then spent two months temping at an advertising company for which, after some persuasion, she would work full-time. "I had come from industries where staff took long lunches, but there they would go off for four hours and often never come back," she explains. "I became very skilled at tracking people down."

When the PA to the managing director, for whom she had been covering, decided not to return, Ms Grant was offered the job. She turned it down twice and accepted only on condition that the company agreed to her list of requirements, including regular staff meetings. She got her way and stayed for five years.

By the early 1990s, however, she felt that her working life had degenerated into a dull nine-to-five routine. So, after inheriting some money, she decided to switch to freelance work. She also took a college self-employment course and launched herself in 1991 as Essential Business Services.

"Everyone thought I was mad," Ms Grant says. "I didn't know anyone doing anything similar, and the recession was beginning."

She advertised in the *Yellow Pages* and wrote to all her old clients — the work started to come in. She invested in a computer, photocopier, printer, modem, fax, transcription and binding machines, yet to begin with she was unsure whether she would succeed. "But I knew I was good at what I did and that I could always temp or get another job," she says.

Seven years later, Ms Grant is happy to work alone from home — transcribing information on breast cancer, taking the minutes for a restaurant group meeting, or covering a reception at a radio station. She is no better off financially than when employed by a firm, but the work is varied and she is far more content.

In 1984 Ms Grant qualified for IQPS membership, only to discover there was no Edinburgh branch. So, using a contact at British Midland who offered free internal flights in Scotland if she could set one up, she established and, for four years, ran the Aberdeen-based IQPS office. The Scotland HQ is now ten years old.

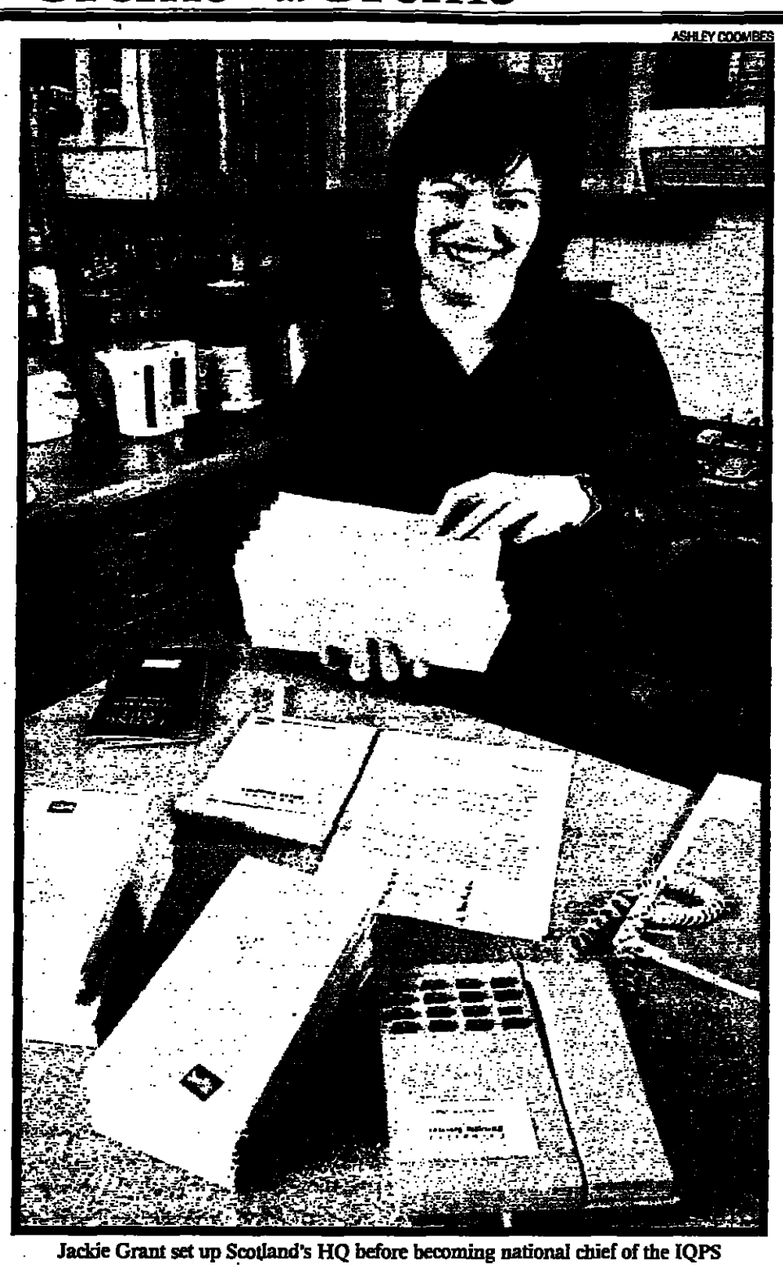
Running a large branch of the organisation soon tempted Ms Grant to aim higher: "I remember mentioning to Liz Smaje, my predecessor, that I wanted to become national chairman — until I realised how much work was involved." Last year, she achieved that ambition. The unpaid role involves overseeing every aspect of IQPS business which, with 3,000 members, Ms Grant likens to running a small company. She wants to increase membership by making more administrative staff aware of the benefits of being part of a professional organisation.

"As well as the events and guest speakers we have, there is a wealth of skill and information within the organisation which we just don't exploit enough — help in starting out, upgrading skills or changing jobs."

With her career path, it is not surprising she believes that if something is meant to happen, it will. Of her current appointment, she says: "I intend to make the most of it."

● *For membership details call IQPS on 01628-625007*

ASHLEY COOMBES



Jackie Grant set up Scotland's HQ before becoming national chief of the IQPS

Dear Jane...

Problems at the office? Write to Jane, Special Reports, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN; or fax to 0171-782 5124. Letters will be treated in strict confidence. Some names may be changed.

● I HAVE good qualifications, many years of experience and have been in my present post for several years. I want to change my job and am usually offered interviews for posts I apply for, but never pass the interview stage. Some interviewers say that I come across as shy, yet my manager and colleagues find this hard to believe since I run the office with confidence and use my initiative. I know the guidelines on what to wear and how to behave at interviews, but there is obviously something lacking in my manner. Would some kind of course help?

● THE point to note is that the feedback from interviewers shows that you are coming across as too shy and lacking in confidence. It is good news that you don't actually feel this way, but you seem to be giving that impression nevertheless.

Interview technique is a fascinating subject and, when you delve deeper, it is often much more complex than you may imagine.

Questions such as whether you were applying for the right level of job or whether your interviewers were competent could apply. I also have to point out that sometimes an interviewer does not give the real reason for failing a candidate because he or she does not want to upset the individual concerned.

Your query about courses is a good idea, but it may not be the only way to tackle the problem.

An excellent starting point is to telephone the Department of Employment's Learning Direct helpline, which is free.

These helpful people have a vast database of courses — ring them on 0800-100 900. They will provide greater detail about all the courses, some of which are free and some privately run.

You should also go to some top-class agencies. The reason I suggest this is because they will automatically be happy to help you with your interview technique.

Their staff interview people all day and consequently these people know their stuff.

They won't mind helping you — and it's free — because they may be able to place you in a job.

Choose those agencies with a quality refund guarantee to their clients if candidates are unhappy. This ensures that they offer a top-drawer service.

The best of these firms offer a three-month, 100 per cent refund guarantee, or simply a 100 per cent refund for a shorter period of time.

TIME-SAVERS

A weekly guide to keyboard skills by Chris Ward

IF YOU are fed up with being taken to the Microsoft website every time you open Internet Explorer, you can change the first page you see when you start it up. The official way is to click on View/Internet Options/General/Use Current, but there is a quicker way. Once you have navigated your way to the site that you would like to be your home page, you'll see a little "e" next to its address. Left-click on this and drag it to the Home icon (it's shaped like a house) on the toolbar, click Yes to confirm your action and then this will be your new home page.

If you like to view different pages at different times of the day — news in the morning, cartoons in the afternoon, or whatever — you can easily make a home page of your own, listing as many pages as you want, which can be easier to access than the Favourites menu, and which allows you to choose what page you want to see before you go online.

Open Word and type in the full address — for example, http://www.the-times.co.uk — and, if it doesn't automatically turn into a blue-coloured, underlined hyperlink, select the whole address and click on the Insert Hyperlink button on the toolbar. Save the file in HTML format, then open your web browser. Click in File/Open and find the file that you have just saved, then set it to be your default home page.

Now, when you fire up your web browser, it will show you this page of hyperlinks and you can click on whichever site you want to see.

☐ IT IS quite easy to change a file's program association if it has been incorrectly set. Select the file by left-clicking on it once, then hold down the Shift key and right-click on it. Click on Open With from the menu which pops up and choose the new program you would like to use to open the file. Then just click on the Always Use This Program to Open This Type of File check box and click OK. If you only want to open a file with a new program just this once, don't check this box.

☐ WHEN using Outlook or Outlook Express, you can start writing an e-mail message but not send it immediately if you need to add more information later. Just click on File/Save (or File/Save As) and save it in your Draft messages folder — now it won't be sent until you reopen it and then click on Send.

☐ A QUICK way to get to your hard disk if you are working in Internet Explorer 4 is simply to type a backslash (top left to bottom right) in the Address bar and hit enter. Click the back arrow to get back to your Web page.

Hard times can be a blessing in disguise

As firms shed staff in a recession, doors open for others, says **Amy Anderson**

Although daily reports of job losses seem to cast continual gloom over the employment market, especially in the City, the reality is that recession can actually mean good news for both temporary and permanent workers.

As recession hits, opportunities for some people open up. Companies and workers can become more innovative when pushed to the wall.

Businesses find that cutting costs and coldly examining their structure generates new ideas as well as greater efficiency. Those employees who are unsuited to the tasks they are performing are identified and may then be better utilised in a new position.

As recession bites, a temporary workforce is often the only workable solution for destabilised companies, especially those where workloads tend to fluctuate. Access to a skilled temporary workforce allows such companies to get the necessary work done at short notice, without having to support an oversized permanent staff.

Researchers at the Angela Mortimer recruitment agency have analysed past trends to discover that new expansion will probably follow about six months after the recent spate of job cuts. The interim period, however, is a good time for temps to try for more senior jobs than they may otherwise have considered.

During a recession, senior jobs for highly skilled temporary staff become available more frequently than when the economy is buoyant. This is the perfect opportunity for temps with their sights set on high-status jobs to make inroads into companies that only consider temporary staff during a squeeze.

Once the economy has regained its composure and permanent contracts are offered again, those temps who have proved themselves are in a stronger position to claim jobs as permanent staff.

Angela Mortimer says that in a recession: "Everything is turned upside down. Permanent staff who are underperforming get moved out, and there are masses of chances for temps with their sights set on an ambitious career to make their move into areas that would have otherwise been blocked to them."

Furthermore, technological advances mean that in a recession today, unlike in the past, temps and support staff can take on far more complex tasks. A temp who understands how to use the latest electronic tools — including the Internet — may be able to do the jobs of three workers. And when a company is tightening its belt, that makes such a person an attractive proposition.

Recession is the time to think hard about your most cherished ambitions, then strike out to achieve them. At times such as these, employers are less prone to adopt a "we're too good for you" attitude. If you are willing to work on short-term contracts and prepared to stretch yourself, you may capture that top job sooner than you expected.



PETER TRIEVNOR



Helen Chalk, whose brief involves correspondence with high-profile people such as Richard Branson and Glenn Hoddle

Daily dealings with business high-flyers

MY DAY

A day in the life of Helen Chalk, PA to Jeff Grout, the UK managing director of Robert Half International, a financial recruitment group in Windsor

I arrive at **9am**, go through the post, phone messages and the e-mail before then sitting down with Jeff to go through the day's agenda. He dictates letters and tells me about any meetings that may need arranging.

By **10am** I am organising the celebrity interview schedules for the 1999 Robert Half evening forums, about business success, to which we invite clients. I have written to people such as the England football coach Glenn Hoddle, athlete Roger Black and business tycoon Richard Branson, so I make follow-up calls to their PAs.

We launched *The Adventure Capitalists* in October, co-written by Jeff, which was based on previous Robert Half interviews. It looks at the professional success of 12 entrepreneurs including Sir Terence Conran and Prue Leith.

I was involved from scratch, making contact with PAs and following things up, and also getting the press involved.

My next jobs for the morning are to type up the dictation and continue dealing with Jeff's incoming calls.

At **1pm** I pop out for half an hour. I have worked for Jeff for three years and it is a fast-moving environment. When I first started, it was very much on the secretarial side but, in time, I wanted more responsibility. The book was my first major project.

I have recently organised a programme of international career seminars for accountants in Brussels, Paris, London and Amsterdam. My previous job was as PA to the managing director of an international trading company based in Maidenhead.

> I must organise the celebrity interview schedules

I am back in the office by **1.30pm** to go through the messages before I go to see Jeff for more dictation of memos to other directors.

I organise the weekly teleconference call for the directors and e-mail them the agenda items, before typing up the memos and other letters.

I spend much of my time on the telephone because many of our senior clients are ringing to arrange meetings and Christmas lunches. Jeff tries to visit our other offices as well, so I attempt to juggle his schedule so he can get around as efficiently as possible.

He is in the office for only two or three days each week, so I need to use my initiative. After three years here, there are a lot of things I can handle by myself. I feel much more confident now and I know that Jeff trusts me to make decisions — we definitely work as a team.

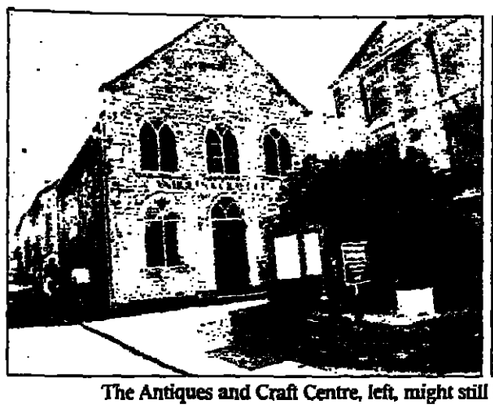
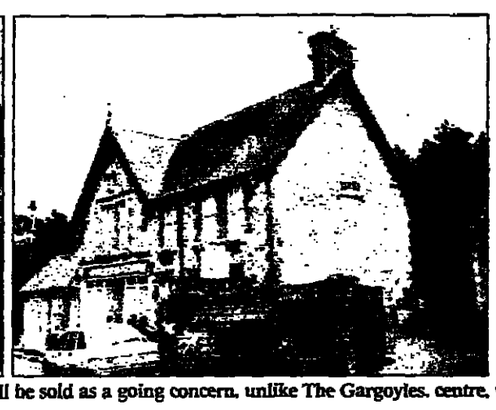
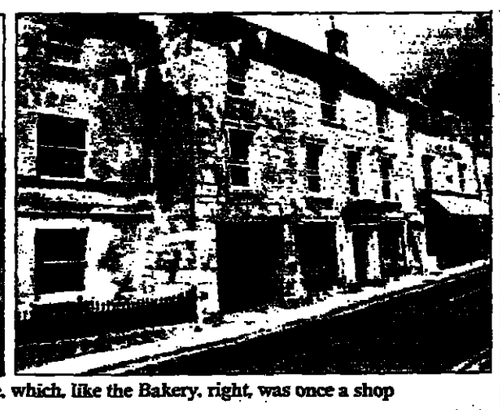
By **4pm** I find myself organising the venue for the forthcoming board meeting and managers' meeting. I book accommodation and sort out the menus for both lunch and dinner, and make sure the hotel has all the equipment required, such as overhead projectors.

At **5.30pm** I go through what I have done during the day with Jeff. He gives me work to follow up since he will not be in the office tomorrow — internal meetings and meetings with clients to be arranged.

I leave for home at **6pm**.

● *Helen Chalk was talking to Amanda Loose*

Outside the city, the local shop is becoming a thing of the past. Inside, it could well be below your flat, says **Amanda Loose**

The Antiques and Craft Centre, left, might still be sold as a going concern, unlike The Gargoyles, centre, which, like the Bakery, right, was once a shop

A closed chapter in village history

Five or six village shops close each week, says the Village Retail Services Association (ViRSA). Among recent casualties are Jean and Barry Frampton, who are about to shut up shop for the last time. The couple have been running Mereworth Stores, in the village of Mereworth, Kent, for the past 27 years but have decide to sell up and retire. Trade is dropping off and they are unable to compete with the big boys.

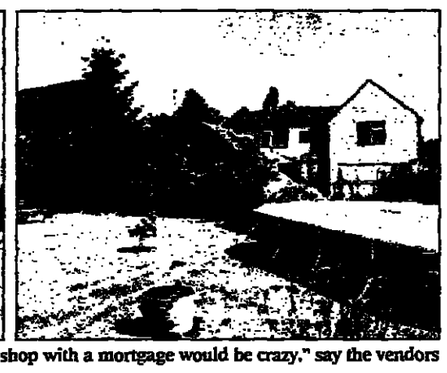
Almost 3,000 out of 11,000 villages are now without a shop. ViRSA cites a 15 to 20 per cent decline in the number of single stores, in villages with populations of 1,000 or fewer, over the past ten years, which means that five or six such shops are closing each week.

Any reversal in the trend, says the association, will depend on the future effects of transport policy, incentives to increase trade and the education of the rural population to support their community generally.

Mrs Frampton says: "Trade has dropped in the past three years and we never see some villagers. We used to get quite a bit of passing trade, people going to and from work, but they can pull up at the petrol stations to buy milk, cigarettes and so on. We still have many regulars but no one does a big shop in the village stores as they did when we started out 27 years ago."

There has been a shop on the site since the late 1800s and, before that, a pub. The shop makes an appearance in C. Henry Warren's biography, *A Boy in Kent*, at the turn of the century, when it was a thriving store, with a bakery in what is now the Framptons' garage.

Times are changing, as David Parry at Cluttons Daniel Smith in Maidstone, which is handling the sale, is aware: "At the moment, the closing of a village shop seems to be an economic fact of life. It is always a sad event when it happens and quite difficult, not only for the vendors, who have invariably run the business all of their working lives, but for the community as well.

Mereworth Stores and garden: "Anyone taking on a shop with a mortgage would be crazy," say the vendors

"They are faced with living in a place that no longer has the amenities it once had. Similarly, it begins to erode our perception of village life — a community that centres on the church, school and village shop."

Kent lost another village shop this summer, in Mersham. It closed at the end of August after 150 years of trading. Countess Mountbatten of Burma, the wife of Lord Brabourne, was one of many residents upset at the loss. She emphasised the importance of the local shop in village life: "I shop there regularly and my in-laws, who have lived in the village for years, also shop there. It's the most awful tragedy for the village.

"The thing is, it is not just the village store, it is also a post office and a sort of mini-community centre. People meet there when they are doing their shopping and exchange information. Particularly for old people who don't have a car, it is awful news."

Changes are also afoot in the Cotswold village of Painswick, where four shops are on the market. Diane Mearns at Hamptons International in Painswick is selling the bakery and the Antiques and Craft Centre, along with Bell Cottage, a converted florists and gift shop. Such properties are being converted to residential use, or offices.

"I have lived in the village for 14 years, and there are fewer and fewer shops," she says. "It is quite dramatic and it seems that everything commercial here is up for sale, which is obviously due to out-of-village shopping. Anything new opening up is aimed at tourists, as the supermarkets are winning on the general village trading store.

"The old dairy has been sold, and converted into a bungalow; the newsagent has closed down in the last year, and the butcher's and fruit shops are now up for sale. I will, hopefully, be able to sell the Antiques and Craft Centre as a going concern, but I don't expect the bakery will be sold as a baker's shop, but to go to residential. Plans had been drawn up, but not passed, so the old bakery could be converted to residential."

Like many other shopkeepers looking to sell up, the Framptons were advised by their estate agent to obtain planning permission for their shop to be converted into a private house before putting their property on the market, to make it easier to sell.

Guy Leonard at Guy Leonard & Co, in association with Humberts, in Pulborough, West Sussex, has recently resold The Gargoyles, in Bury Village, which was previously the village shop. He says: "The best way to sell was with planning permission for change of use. People do want to take on village shops, but cannot find lenders to fund them. Banks and building societies are very wary about lending against them as they make such slim profits.

"The previous vendors of The Gargoyles tried to sell it for five years as a going concern. We took it on to our books and recommended they obtained planning permission for change of use. This was obtained in October 1996, and they found a buyer straight away, and the shop closed on November 2."

Back in Mereworth, Mrs Frampton says: "Our regular customers are very sad that we are going, and we will probably miss it. We would love to sell it as a shop, but I don't honestly think we will. Anyone taking on a shop with a mortgage would be crazy. Village shops are just disappearing and hardly any are sold as such. It's a shame, the end of a way of life."

The cost of living over the shop

Mention that you live over a shop and chances are that your audience will immediately conjure up images of a kebab or curry house, full of pungent aromas, or somewhere a little shabby. But as more mixed developments are built in the heart of the capital, living over a shop is fast becoming a more common option.

But while such flats offer first-time buyers the chance to get a foot on the housing ladder — with savings of up to 30 per cent in some areas away from Central London — those at the top end of the market often achieve premiums equal to those not over commercial premises in the same area.

Two penthouses at Soho Lofts, developed by the Manhattan Loft Company above Sir Terence Conran's restaurant Mezzo, in Wardour Street, sold for £450 per square foot, a record for Soho, according to the agents, Knight Frank.

Even flats above fish restaurants sell well if they are in the right area. The Mayfair agent Peter Wetherell had no trouble selling such a flat a couple of years ago, for a premium.

Mayfair's Mount Street is lined with shops topped with smart flats, and is, says David Taylor at Chestertons Residential, "an incredibly prestigious address". Kevin Ryan at Egerton is selling three flats and a penthouse above Purdey's, the gunsmith, at Audley House, from £850,000 to £1.2 million: "Flats above Mount Street shops are some of the most sought-after Mayfair addresses. They often command some of the highest prices in the area."

Portobello Road is another hot spot: Rupert Fisher at Foxtons is selling a three-bedroom maisonette there for £245,000. He says: "Although it is a market street, it is a fashionable address. Anything you save by being above a shop here, or in nearby Westbourne Grove and Ledbury Road, is cancelled out by paying to be in a trendy street."

In some areas, you can't avoid living over the shop, and often end up paying for the privilege, says Linda Beaney, at Beaney Pearce, such as in the heart of Knightsbridge and Chelsea, particularly the north and south end of Sloane Street, where there are blocks of flats above exclusive shops such as Chanel and Christian Dior.

Mr Taylor says flats above shops are 10 per cent to 15 per cent cheaper on average than they would be if they were in a residential location. "But this figure varies significantly, depending on the location and over what sort of shop the flat is located," he adds. "Fast-food shops and dry-cleaners tend to have the greatest impact on price, and are the most difficult to sell."

He advises prospective purchasers to be cautious: "Bear in mind that premises can change ownership and use; a coffee shop today could be a curry takeaway next; it is certainly worth checking to see if any planning applications are in place. You may find that some building societies are reluctant to grant mortgages on flats above shops.



In demand: Mayfair flats

"There are, of course, benefits to buying above a shop. You will get much more accommodation for your money; and the chances are you won't be too far away from a newsagent or grocery."

Douglas & Gordon in Chelsea is selling a flat next door to McDonald's on the King's Road, which the agent, Ed Mead, says could be worth a further 30 per cent in another location. Goldschmidt & Howland in St John's Wood is selling a two-bedroom flat above shops in Abbey Road for £155,000. Despite the street's cachet, it would sell for around £200,000 if not above a shop, say the agents.

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Moving house hits the roof

Property transactions can be very expensive — and the Government's reforms will not help, says **Rachel Kelly**

The typical house buyer pays £1,060 to pick up the keys to his new home, and the typical seller £1,400 to relinquish them, new figures show — and that's without stamp duty.

Buried in the Government's *Key Research on Easier Buying and Selling*, issued last week by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, are the first estimates of the economic reality of moving. The figures are based on the tracking of 800 sales during the past year, and on other consumer research.

The numbers make sober reading. The real costs are likely to be considerably higher than the government figures, which assume costs for the average £60,000 home but do not include the expense of removal lorries, redecorating and all the extras that accompany a move, from sending out change-of-address cards to setting up service connections.

The Government estimates that the costs work out at about 3 per cent of the value of a property. At a time of low house-price inflation, such costs could all but wipe out any theoretical profit in buying and selling. Those who in the past have become richer solely by watching their wallpaper, beware. The days of easy profits may be over.

Moreover, the Government's proposed house-buying reforms will make the process even more expensive, and buying and selling in the UK will cease to be cheaper than in other comparable countries.

> The days of easy profits from sales may be over

At the moment, the costs to buyers are dominated by conveyancing fees, mortgage processing costs and survey fees, where these are paid. Some also pay brokers' fees averaging £55, although many brokers operate on the basis of commission received from the lender. A quarter of those in the survey did not use a mortgage, and around 60 per cent did not have an independent survey.

If a mortgage is not required, the costs are about £450 less. The average cost of conveyancing is £376, and the average cost of a search £94, although the latter may fall due to computerisation. In addition, stamp duty is levied on houses costing more than £60,000, and is paid by about two in five buyers. It typically adds a further £1,058 to legal costs.

In Scotland, buyers pay slightly more for conveyancing, about £450, reflecting the greater involvement of solicitors in buying a house. The costs of arranging a mortgage there are lower because of lower average house prices. For sellers, the main cost is the payment of estate agents. Charges average £1,000, with around £176 paid in separate advertising charges. Solicitors' fees for conveyancing average £345.

The Government's reforms would see charges rise for sellers by about £400, as those sellers become responsible for providing an information pack, including a survey of the property, for prospective buyers.

The past week has seen all those involved in the property market giving warning that other costs could be higher, too. Sue Anderson, from the Council of Mortgage Lenders, says: "It is not clear at this stage whether the survey to be included in the seller's information pack would be sufficient to provide adequate protection for the buyer, who may wish to commission his own report, given the principle of *caveat emptor*.

"A buyer's lender may also want a survey. This could lead to two qualified surveyors needing to visit the property for different clients."

The proposals could also lead to homebuyers taking out extra insurance to protect themselves against the risk of faulty surveys. Insurers predict a boom in legal expenses insurances as a result of the new plans.

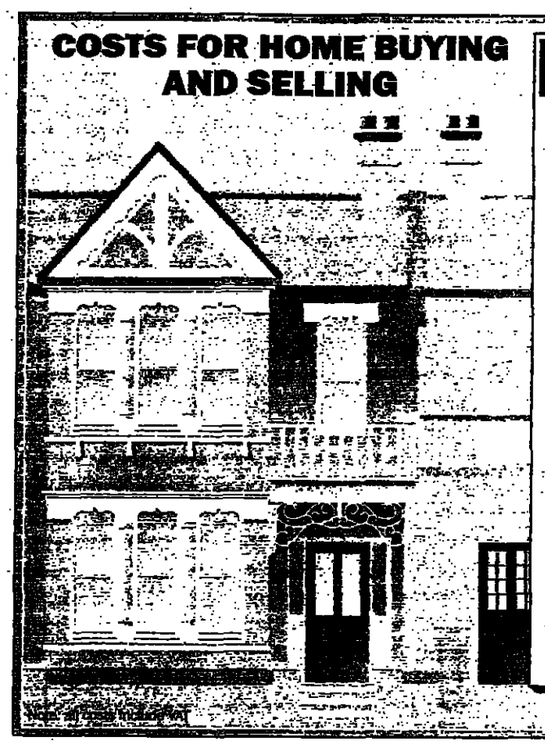
Hugh Dunsmore-Hardy, from the National Association of Estate Agents, says agents might also have to charge extra fees to put together the seller's information pack, increasing the 2 per cent sole agency fees which are standard, and the 3 per cent joint agency fees. Many agents would, however, incur the costs initially and then deduct them from the final selling price of the property.

John German, of the agents Cluttons Daniel Smith, says extra costs will clearly affect first-time buyers and those at the bottom end of the housing market more than those at the top. "For sellers at the lower end, an extra £500 or so is a lot of money," he says.

Yet the Government's counter-argument is that the reforms should save everyone money. A seller usually loses about £226 when a sale falls through. Buyers lose even more. Those whose attempts fail currently face bills of around £680, thanks to conveyancing fees, abortive mortgage arrangement charges of £170 for the valuation survey and £295 for arrangement fees. Where a survey had been commissioned, this costs an average £272. Add in other bills of £188, and the total is £680.

Because most sellers are also buyers, says Hilary Armstrong, the Housing Minister, the extra costs incurred as sellers will be balanced by the savings they make as buyers.

Unless the reforms are statutory, however, the key question is whether anyone will willingly incur fresh expense. A Legal & General survey found that more than half of those questioned said they would not be prepared to pay more than £250 for a seller's information pack. The Government has been warned.



COSTS FOR HOME BUYING AND SELLING

FOR SALE

TYPICAL FEES AND COSTS

All buyers

(Tracking and recent buyers surveys together)

Solicitor's fees: Conveyancing	£376
Solicitor's fees: Search fees	£94
Solicitor's fees: Land Registry	£94
Solicitor's fees: Stamp duty	£1,058
Solicitor's fees: Other	£39
Mortgage: Valuation	£176
Mortgage: Arrangement	£294
Mortgage: Combined fees	£250
Mortgage: Broker/adviser	£255
Survey fee:	£294
Other major expenditure	£705

All sellers

Estate agents' fees: Ads	£176
Estate agents' fees: Main	£1,035
Estate agents' fees: Other	£1,067
Solicitors' fees: Conveyancing	£345
Solicitors' fees: Other	£240
Other major expenditure	£424

SMART MOVES

A HOUSE in Fulham previously owned by Catherine Zeta Jones is for sale. She is the star of the latest Hollywood blockbuster, *The Mask of Zorro*. Richard Fairbrass, the lead singer of Right Said Fred, lives on the same street. The house is for sale through the Fulham office of Douglas & Gordon for £225,000.

☐ A HOME once owned by the equestrian artist and former President of The Royal Academy, Sir Alfred Munnings, is for sale. Beldon House, Chelsea Park Gardens SW3, was named by Sir Alfred after Beldon Hall in Ireland which was featured in a book by Surtees, one of his favourite authors. The house is for sale through Lane Fox and Cluttons Daniel Smith for £1.75 million.

☐ THE property of the former England cricket captain Bob Willis is for sale. The Hermitage, West Place, which overlooks Wimbledon Common, is for sale through Robert Holmes's Wimbledon office for £535,000.

☐ JOSS ACKLAND is selling his flat in Covent Garden. The property is in the heart of theatreland and is just a few minutes' walk from the Garrick Club. Mr Ackland has acted in films such as *White Mischief* and *Lethal Weapon II*. The flat is for sale through Knight Frank for £350,000.

☐ THE Grade II listed Whatley Manor House Hotel in Easton Grey, Wiltshire, is for sale. The house was built in the 17th century and was extended by the Canadian sportsman H.C. Cox in 1925. Cox was deputy master of the Beaufort Hunt and used the estate as a base from which to hunt. Whatley Manor is now an hotel with 29 bedrooms. Tim Lawson, of Lane Fox, says: "Whatley Manor is a superbly located mansion house with great potential as either an hotel or conversion back to a country house." Lane Fox's Cirencester office is selling this impressive property for £2.5 million.

☐ NATWEST Group Development is constructing the first residences overlooking Trafalgar Square since it was built in the 1830s. Eight flats are to be built at 10 St Martin's Place with prices starting at £220,000. The flats are for sale through DTZ Debenham Thorpe.

BEN WAKEHAM

CORRECTION

A photograph accompanying an article headlined "Invisible Renaissance on the Mersey", published in *The Times* on December 2, was of the Waterloo Warehouse at Trafalgar Dock, Liverpool. Dr Layth Bunni is the director of the City Partnership, and is not connected with Liverpool City Council.

Why are vendors offering their properties for sale and for rent at the same time? **Amanda Loose** investigates

Hedging your bets when the housing market starts to shake

It is a race that more and more homeowners are deciding to run. As buyers and sellers become increasingly twitchy about the property market, vendors are hedging their bets by offering their homes for sale and for rent at the same time.

David Lawson put The Homestead in Keinton Mandeville, Somerset, on the market in the summer, but says he has had little interest in the Grade II listed farmhouse that he has renovated. Though he would prefer to sell, Mr Lawson has decided to play the sales and rental game. The house is for sale through Humberts in Sherborne for £265,000, or for rent at £1,000 a month.

Mr Lawson says: "The sales market has dried up totally. No one seems to want to move at present. I would rather sell the property — rental returns are very low here, around 3 or 4 per cent — but if I am not going to sell for six months, I may as well let it to get some return."

Hamptons International received 73 new instructions on the rentals market from frustrated vendors in the past quarter, a 34 per cent increase on last year.

Jane Kirkcaldy of Hamptons International in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, says 20 per cent of the rental properties on her books are also for sale. She claims that the trend stems back to events in the City and on the property market in September.

"Most owners cannot afford property to be empty," she says. "In many cases, people offer properties for six months' rental and hope that the sales market will improve in that time. Either the house has been on the market for a few months and they have had no interest, so they put it up for rent as well, or they are committed to a move and need some income; or, being anxious about the market, they have hedged their bets from the start."

Paul Greenwood at Stacks Relocation reports that his clients are increasingly looking to let or sell their properties from the outset, and the story is the same in the capital. Ed Mead at Douglas & Gordon in Chelsea says the trend crept into the market three months ago.

He says: "A year ago, you could have sold anything. Now the market is a little more circumspect. The race tends to happen when someone has found a home to buy and simply has to move on. People are being pragmatic. Though in most cases they would much rather sell, they are open to rental offers.

"If this is the case for you, give your agent a sensible time to market the property. It takes time to prepare a property for the sales market, but a tenant can be found tomorrow. As a result, if you do instruct an agent to offer your property on both the sales and rentals market from the beginning, make sure you are able to move quickly. And bear in mind that the rental market is not strong.

"Traditionally, whenever the sales market has dipped, the rentals market has grown. But that is not the case this time. Many overseas banks have pulled in their relocations, and budgets have been cut."

Simon Umfreville of De Groot Collis advises frustrated vendors to be prepared to move swiftly if a tenant comes along. "The rental process is generally far quicker than sales," he says. "Also, do not forget to tell your mortgage lender and insurance company that the situation has changed. If your property is leasehold, check that the lease allows the property to be let."

Suzie Cockburn of Humberts in Sherborne believes that some stopgap landlords are likely to face a dilemma. She says: "Short-term lettings are regarded as a useful way to keep a property warm over the winter months and to generate some rental income. But because most lettings will be six-month assured-shorthold tenancies, vendor-landlords should bear in mind that the property is out of circulation for four months. The tenancy agreement would allow the property to be marketed for sale only during the last two months of an assured-shorthold tenancy.

"When a buyer is found, contracts cannot be exchanged until the property is vacant. If timing is important, letting at this stage of the year is inappropriate.

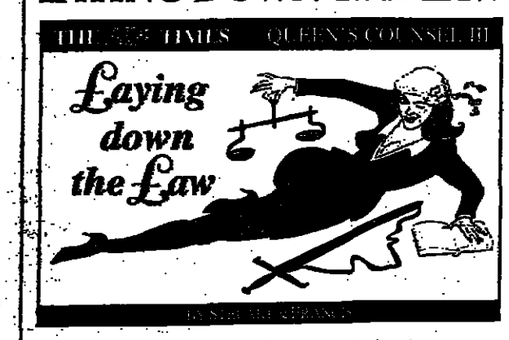
"It is sometimes necessary for the vendor-landlord to spend a little money to put a property into proper letting condition. Tenants, particularly on short-term lettings, will expect carpets, curtains and possibly white goods to be supplied. But these items may well eventually help the house to sell."

A SAFETY NET

HUGH OBBARD is keeping his options open. A buyer of investment properties for clients by profession, he is trying to sell his own flat in Queensway, West London, which he bought to refurbish and sell on. "After six weeks on the sales market," he says, "I had not received a good offer. So as a safety net, at the end of October, I offered it for rent as well. I'd had a couple of offers for the £275,000 flat, but neither was particularly exciting. The level of transactions has fallen off noticeably, and buyers are happier to negotiate quite a discount on asking prices. "Rental was definitely plan B, but it is becoming more of a likely option. It is a way to ride out the storm while waiting for the market to regain confidence. You have to be in tune with what the market is doing. You have to show a degree of flexibility."

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Let's be fair to the Fifties

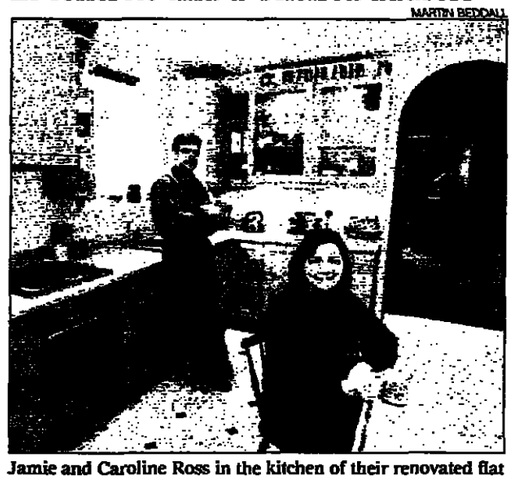
How **Jamie Ross**, out looking for a pad, found a rock-solid investment in concrete and a Chelsea address

For a thirtyish couple searching for the ideal home, a Fifties flat seemed unpromising. But despite the horrors of that era's architecture, the address was still Cheyne Place, Chelsea.

The executors of the will of its only previous occupier had put the flat on the market, but it had been empty for more than a year. We first viewed it one evening, a fourth-floor walk-up that had escaped much of the comings and goings of the world below since its construction in 1953. Bulbs barely illuminated blank walls and floors. An assortment of abandoned possessions — yellowed linen, a single bed, an old bath thermometer, bottles and tins with faded labels in cupboards, a pile of Seventies magazines from the sad inventory of the deceased — lay about.

We were told he had stood on the site as the building had gone up and, by the looks of it, not much had changed. There was no central heating and the wiring sprouted dangerously. We looked at it again during the day. Being high up, it had a view into the Physic Garden, with a Thames glimpse one way, and across Chelsea towards the Victorian skyline of the South Kensington museums. At £185,000, it was in our price bracket. But we were suspicious. The flat seemed low-priced, the lease (55 years left), the condition (grotty) . . . and that ugly-duckling Fifties architecture.

But the agent advised us that 55 years was not "short" in Chelsea — and was extendable after three years — and that such a gold-plated address would prove a smart investment. After failing to find anything else, we took the plunge. Many other central flats were expensive, poky conversions, carve-ups of once well-proportioned buildings and rooms, now all jarring proportions and mezzanines.



MARTIN BEDDALL

Jamie and Caroline Ross in the kitchen of their renovated flat

There was a bonus. Our fears for the flat's structural soundness were allayed by our surveyor's ruling that, being made mainly of concrete, it was as solid as a rock.

Many homeseekers may recoil at the thought of Fifties architecture, but developers are doing imaginative things. Charles Wells, an architecture lecturer at Westminster University, says: "In the Fifties, truth to materials was the predominant philosophy. The internal structure of a building, typically a concrete frame, rather than being hidden, was 'expressed' on the exterior. Having concrete beams showing on the outside of a building may not now appeal, but the clean lines of Fifties blocks give developers a chance to dress up drab buildings in finishes and colours that can look quite stylish."

One example is the sell-out Metro Central Heights block in Elephant and Castle, South London, designed by the Hungarian exile Erno Goldfinger, and formerly the Department of Social Security's Alexander Fleming House.

Bronwen Edwards, of the Twentieth Century Society, says: "In the past few years, postwar architecture has become fashionable. Some examples have become 'iconic'."

In the cycle of taste, the appreciation of an architectural style can be delayed for decades after an era. This year's guided society visit to Goldfinger buildings in London was oversubscribed.

Ms Edwards says: "Fifties buildings have had a bad press, which is unfair because they were usually built to briefs issued by councils on postwar budgets."

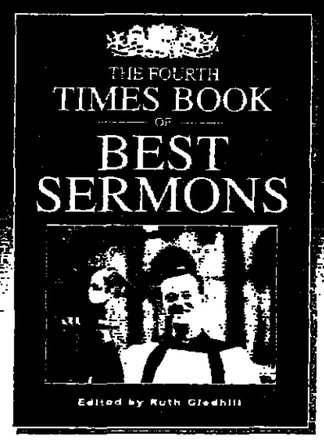
That is the other thing that a Fifties property can provide: location. The bombsites from which postwar flats arose tended to be in rather than out of town. The message is: Don't shun postwar; you could find that you are able to buy into a central area. And the building could be listed.

Though the "slab and column" construction of Fifties blocks often allows for worry-free lateral conversions — removing the internal partition walls, for example — those embarking on converting Fifties property should be warned. When we tried to remove the internal partition walls, we found that when our block was built, there must have been a surplus of postwar bunker concrete, generous quantities of which were used as the principal element in walls, under floors, behind tiles and in ceilings. Our builders used a jackhammer because it was the only tool able to make any impression on the unyielding uprights. And once the concrete had been pierced, underlying ash-brick exploded back to its original state.

Four months later, with partition walls down and the place done up, we have developed a soft spot for Fifties architecture and concrete. We like the well-proportioned rooms, the maximisation of window space, the reassuring solidity and the neighbour-proof acoustics. But our builders, having heaved scores of bags full of concrete down four flights of stairs, would probably beg to differ.

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CHANGING TIMES

Law Report December 16 1998 House of Lords

Donor retained sufficient interest for tax purposes

Ingram and Another v Inland Revenue Commissioners

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Steyn, Lord Hoffmann, Lord Clyde and Lord Hutton

[Speeches December 10]

A gift of freehold property, subject to a leasehold estate or other specific proprietary interest in favour of the donor, was not a gift with reservation of benefit for the purposes of inheritance tax, provided that any benefits for the donor were derived from the lease or other interest retained by the donor, not from the freehold estate given away.

The House of Lords so held, allowing an appeal by Michael Warren Ingram and Christopher David Palmer-Tomkinson, the executors of the estate of Jane Lindsay Ingram, from a decision dated July 28, 1997 of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Nourse and Lord Justice Evans, Lord Justice Millett dissenting) (*The Times* September 11, 1997; [1997] STC 1234) allowing an appeal by the Inland Revenue Commissioners from Mr Justice Ferris's decision (*The Times* May 23 1995; [1995] STC 564) allowing the executors' appeal against the commissioners' notice of determination dated October 10, 1994.

Mr Robert Venables, QC, Mr Simon Taube and Miss Amanda Hardy for the executors; Mr Edward Nugee, QC and Mr Michael Furness for the commissioners.

LORD HOFFMANN said that in 1987 Lady Ingram, then 72, gave her country house and 61 acres of land in Berkshire in trust for her children and grandchildren.

She made a gift rather than allowing the property to pass under her will in an attempt to avoid what would otherwise have been a liability to inheritance tax on her death.

Section 3A of the Inheritance Tax Act 1984, inserted by the Finance Act 1986, enabled such a gift to be a "potentially exempt transfer" which would be free from inheritance tax unless the donor died within the next seven years.

Lady Ingram had lived in the house for over 40 years and did not want to move out. The beneficiaries were willing to allow her to stay, but an informal arrangement of that kind would have fallen foul of section 102 of the 1986 Act which applied after March 18, 1986 where an individual disposed of any property by way of gift and either "(i)(a) possession and enjoyment of the property is not bona fide assumed by the donee at or before the beginning of the relevant period: or (b) at any time in the relevant period the property is not enjoyed to the entire exclusion of the donor and of any benefit to him by contract or otherwise...".

If the possession and enjoyment of the property was not bona fide assumed by the donee to the entire exclusion of the donor, the "property subject to a reservation" was treated for the purposes of the 1984 Act as property to which the donor was beneficially entitled immediately before his death.

If Lady Ingram had simply continued to live in the house, the gift would have been ineffective and for the purposes of inheritance tax. Section 102 had a long history with similar provisions relating to estate duty under the Finance Act 1894 and before that, account duty under the Customs and Inland Revenue Act 1889. There had also been similar provisions in Australia.

The theme which ran though all the cases decided by the House of Lords and the Privy Council was that although the section did not allow a donor to have his cake and eat it, there was nothing to stop him from carefully dividing up the cake, eating part and having the rest.

If the benefits which the donor continued to enjoy were by virtue of property which was never comprised in the gift, he had not reserved any benefit out of the property of which he disposed.

If one applied that proposition to the highly sophisticated English land law, by which various interests, each regarded as separate items of property, could subsist simultaneously in respect of the same land, it was clear that the scope for discrimination in limiting the terms of the gift to exclude interests which the donor wished to retain was very wide.

In particular, the beneficial ownership of land might be divided in terms of time as well as space, so that the right to enjoyment of land for a limited period, such as for life or a term of years, and the right to enjoy the land after the expiry of that period, could exist simultaneously as property interests in possession and in remainder or reversion.

One such interest might form the subject matter of a gift while the other was retained.

Lady Ingram was therefore advised to make a gift which excluded a proprietary interest entitling her to continue to live in the property for the rest of her life.

Ideally she would have wished to reserve to herself a life interest, but that would have made the land "settled property" as defined in Part III of the 1984 Act, and by virtue of section 49 she would have been treated for the purposes of liability to inheritance tax as beneficially entitled to the whole property. So the gift would have made no difference.

It was therefore necessary for her to retain an interest for a fixed term of years, namely a leasehold interest.

The problem was how she could retain the lease and give away the reversion expectant upon it. A lease required a lessor and a lessee, so Lady Ingram could not have granted a lease to herself.

On March 29, 1987 she conveyed the property to her solicitor, Mr MacFadyen, to hold as her nominee. On March 30 he granted her two identical leases of different parts of the property for 20 years rent free, giving no covenants except the covenant for quiet enjoyment.

On March 31, Mr MacFadyen, at Lady Ingram's direction, conveyed the property subject to the leases, to trustees to hold on trusts declared in a separate document for the benefit of her children and grandchildren.

Lady Ingram died on February 3, 1989 without having survived the statutory seven years or even the three years which would have entitled her estate to pay a reduced rate of duty.

But the question whether section 102 of the 1986 Act applied remained important: if it did not, the effect of sections 3 and 3A was that tax would be payable on a transfer of value calculated by reference to the value of the property at the time of the gift.

But if section 102 did apply the property would be deemed to form part of Lady Ingram's estate at her death and tax would be payable at the value at that time.

In the intervening period there had been a sharp rise in property prices in the south of England and the value at death was much higher than it had been at the time of the gift.

The Inland Revenue Commissioners made a determination that section 102 applied. With the commissioners' agreement Lady Ingram's executors appealed directly to the High Court.

Mr Justice Ferris agreed that the original grant of the leases had been invalid but held that that did not mean that the leasehold interest which Lady Ingram admittedly acquired against the trustees was a benefit reserved.

He said there had been no point of time at which the trustees and beneficiaries had held the property otherwise than subject to the leasehold interests. Lady Ingram had never intended to give them the property free of those interests, and they were therefore not included in the gift and section 102 had no application.

The Court of Appeal agreed that the leases were invalid but disagreed that section 102 did not apply. In essence they held that it was conceptually impossible for a lease to come into existence until the lessor had acquired the freehold interest. Therefore the gift must have been the unencumbered freehold and the lease must have been a benefit reserved out of it.

Lord Hoffmann said that it was a curious feature of the debate in this appeal that both sides claimed that their views reflected the reality and not the mere form of the transaction.

But the Revenue's version of reality seemed entirely dependent upon the scintilla temporis which must elapse between the conveyance of the freehold to the donee and the creation of the leasehold interest in favour of the donor. His Lordship did not think that a theory based upon the notion of a scintilla temporis could have a very powerful grasp on reality.

It was true that as a matter of conveyancing no lease could come into existence until the freehold had been vested in the intended lessor. But section 102 was concerned not with conveyancing but with beneficial interests. It used words like "enjoyment" and "benefit".

Looking at the real nature of the transaction there seemed no doubt that the trustees and the beneficiaries never at any time acquired the land free of Lady Ingram's freehold interest.

The need for a conveyance to be followed by a lease back was a mere matter of conveyancing form. Why should it make a difference that the reservation of a term of years happened to require the participation of another party if the substance of the matter was that property would pass only subject to the lease?

The Revenue argued that a lease was a contract as well as an estate, and involved contractual obligations between the parties so that it could not be regarded as the mere reservation of property like a life interest.

Lord Hoffmann said that if in addition to the leasehold estate Lady Ingram had obtained by covenant any additional benefits, as in *Re Nichols* ([1975] 1 WLR 534) they would have been benefits reserved. But in a case such as this when she in fact received no such benefits, the contractual nature of the lease was a matter of conveyancing theory rather than substance.

Section 102 was in one sense a penal section. Not only might you not have your cake and eat it, but if you ate more than a few de minimis crumbs of what was given, you were deemed for tax purposes to have eaten the lot.

Moreover, a superficial reading of phrases like "beneficial enjoyment of the property" and "to the entire exclusion ... of the donor" had led to numerous occasions in the past century in which the Revenue had put forward the proposition that, as a matter of practical common sense, it simply must be contrary to the policy of the statute for a donor to be able to give away property such as a house and go on enjoying the benefit of the property by continuing to live there.

That was the premise upon which the Revenue claimed the high ground of substance and reality. It was said that for Lady Ingram to have made a potentially exempt transfer and retained the right to stay in the house was simply too good to be true, and the Court of Appeal accepted that proposition.

But that approach ignored the fact that "property" in section 102 was not something that had physical existence like a house but a specific interest in that property, a legal construct, which could coexist with other interests in the same physical object.

Section 102 did not therefore prevent people from deriving benefit from the object in which they had given away an interest. It applied only when they derived the benefit from that interest.

Section 102 required people to define precisely the interests which they were giving away and the interests, if any, which they were retaining. There could be no doubt that the interest retained by Lady Ingram was a proprietary interest defined with the necessary precision.

His Lordship also held that the leases granted to Lady Ingram were valid.

Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Steyn, and Lord Clyde agreed. Lord Hutton delivered a speech concurring with Lord Hoffmann.

Solicitors: Charles Russell; Solicitor, Inland Revenue.

Justifying late joinder in action

Rees and Another v Mabco (102) Ltd

Before Lord Justice Butler-Sloss and Mr Justice Wall

[Judgment December 11]

A putative defendant who wished to be joined in proceedings after judgment had been given against a company which it had insured and who had made a commercial decision not to join in earlier, had to show a defence which carried some degree of conviction to justify late joinder.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment in dismissing an appeal brought by Eagle Star Insurance Co against the decision of Judge Raymond Jack, QC, in the Bristol Mercantile Court on May 22, 1998 to reverse the decision of District Judge Stuart-Brown who had allowed Eagle Star's application to be joined as second defendants in an action brought by the plaintiffs, Sheila Ann Rees and David John Rees, as executors of the estate of Florence Beatrice May Base against the defendant, Mabco (102) Ltd.

Mr Roderick Denyer, QC, for Eagle Star; Mr Allan Gore for the plaintiffs.

LORD JUSTICE BUTLER-SLOSS said that the plaintiffs were the executors of the deceased who died on September 8, 1993. The cause of death was pleural mesothelioma, brought about by the inhalation of asbestos dust.

Her husband had been employed by the first defendant from 1946 to 1968 as a roofer. During his last ten years he worked almost entirely on the replacement of asbestos roofs. At the end of his working day the deceased shook out his clothes and washed them.

The plaintiffs claimed that the first defendants should have provided the deceased's husband with protection from the dust and should have foreseen that failure to do so might cause injury to the deceased.

The first defendant had a public policy insurance with Eagle Star until June 20, 1977. On September 17, 1996 the solicitors acting for the plaintiffs wrote to Eagle Star informing them of their intention to bring a claim against the first defendant.

Proceedings were commenced and served on September 18. Eagle Star did not reply to the plaintiffs until October 29 when they acknowledged receipt of the letter of September 17.

The plaintiffs' solicitors sent further letters to Eagle Star on November 28, December 3 and December 23. Eagle Star finally responded on January 10, 1997 when they stated that they were not prepared to indemnify Mabco under the terms of the insurance.

On August 20, 1997 the plaintiffs obtained judgment in default with damages to be assessed.

On September 19 Eagle Star issued a summons asking to be joined in the proceedings, to set aside the judgment of the district judge of August 20 and for the determination as to whether the plaintiffs were entitled to bring a claim under the terms of Third Parties (Rights Against Insurers) Act 1930 to be tried as a preliminary issue. The plaintiffs opposed the application.

At the hearing before the district judge, Eagle Star relied on an affidavit in which they relied on the decision of *Gunn v Wallsend Slipway* (*The Times* January 23, 1989) in which Mr Justice Waterhouse had held that the defendant owed no duty of care under the Fatal Accidents Act 1976 and the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1983 to a deceased who had died of mesothelioma caused by inhalation of asbestos dust from the deceased's husband's clothes.

The district judge ordered the judgment of August 20 to be set aside and joined Eagle Star in the proceedings. The plaintiffs appealed.

At the hearing before the judge, Eagle Star provided a full transcript of the judgment in *Gunn* but no further evidence as to the state of knowledge before 1968 as to the effect of secondary exposure to asbestos dust.

Mr Denyer criticised the judge for passing a moral judgment on Eagle Star and for failing to recognise the strength of its proposed defence.

In her Ladyship's judgment the judge's criticism of Eagle Star was not a moral condemnation and the judge was entitled to take into account the fact that the insurance company had taken a commercial decision to wash their hands of the matter.

Eagle Star could have put in some written material which was available as to the evidence of secondary exposure to asbestos dust which it had failed to do.

Eagle Star had failed to discharge the burden of showing it had a good defence and the appeal would be dismissed.

Mr Justice Wall delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: Sansbury Hill, Bristol; Townsends, Swindon.

Administrator's duty to run pension fund

Polly Peck International plc (in Administration) v Henry

Before Mr Justice Buckley

[Judgment November 27]

The duty of an administrator to manage the affairs of a company in administration included the trusteeship of any employees' pension funds of which the company had previously been the trustee.

The administrator should only be reimbursed those costs out of the pension fund to which the company would have been so entitled, but could claim any costs or expenses incurred in administering the fund as costs of the administration.

It would seldom be in the best interests of the beneficiaries of the fund for the court to authorise the appointment and remuneration of a substitute trustee unless the substitute trustee would provide significant beneficial services that the administrator could not.

Mr Justice Buckley so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division when dismissing the application by the administrators of the applicant company, Polly Peck International plc, for a new trustee, the Trustee Corporation Ltd, to be appointed as trustee of the two pension fund schemes set up by the applicant company, together with incidental orders and declarations to enable the Trustee Corporation to recover expenses and be paid remuneration out of the assets of the schemes, one of which would have appointed the respondent, Mr Dominick Henry, as a representative beneficiary of the scheme pursuant to Order 15, rule 13 of the Rules of the Supreme Court.

Mr William Trower for the applicant; Mr James Clifford for the respondent.

MR JUSTICE BUCKLEY said that by declarations of trust dated August 16, 1984 and May 18, 1988 respectively, Polly Peck International established two retirement benefit plans for its present and future employees and those of its subsidiaries, secured by policies taken out with Legal and General Assurance Society Ltd, which PPI held on trust for the purposes of the schemes. The only assets of the funds were the insurance policies.

On October 25, 1990 an administration order was made in respect of PPI. The present administrators, Mr Richard Stone, Mr Christopher Barlow, both of Price Waterhouse Coopers, and Mr Christopher Morris of Deloitte & Touche, had undertaken any necessary work in relation to the schemes since the last director of PPI resigned with effect from August 31, 1996.

All charges or expenses had been treated as costs of the administration. The schemes were to be wound up and the benefits which had accrued to the former employees would either be transferred to other pension schemes or secured under annuity contracts for their benefit.

The administrators maintained that an independent trustee should be appointed to wind up the scheme because of the conflict between their duty to realise the company's assets for the creditors and minimise any expenses to the estate, and their duties as agents of the company in respect of the schemes, incurring time costs which had fallen on the estate's assets because the schemes did not authorise making any charge on the schemes.

They further claimed that a professional trustee could deal more efficiently with questions about members' rights and options, Inland Revenue or Department of Social Security issues and other matters arising from winding up the schemes.

Section 8 of the Insolvency Act 1986 provided: "(2) An administration order is an order directing that, during the period for which the order is in force, the affairs, business and property of the company shall be managed by a person (the 'administrator') appointed for the purpose by the court."

Affirming the decision of Mr Justice Jacob in *Denny v Yeldon and Others* ([1995] 3 All ER 624), it was plain from the wording of section 8(2) that, once appointed, the administrator's duties included managing the affairs of the company and that "affairs" added something beyond "business and property".

Where a company had set up a pension scheme for its employees and had become trustee of that scheme then that scheme and trusteeship were part of the company's affairs.

Section 14 of the 1986 Act provided: "(1) The administrator ... (a) may do all such things as may be necessary for the management of the affairs, business and property of the company..."

Clearly the proper discharge of the duties of the trustee were necessary for the management of the company's affairs.

The nature of the court's jurisdiction to authorise the remuneration of a trustee was identified in *In re Duke of Norfolk's Settlement Trusts* ([1982] 1 Ch 61, 78):

"When the court authorises payment of remuneration to a trustee under its inherent jurisdiction it is, I think, exercising its ancient jurisdiction to secure the competent administration of the trust property just as it has done when it appoints or removes a trustee under its inherent jurisdiction."

His Lordship said that the court should decide in all the circumstances whether it was in the interests of the beneficiaries to pay or increase remuneration.

On the evidence, Price Waterhouse Coopers undoubtedly possessed the necessary expertise to wind up the schemes and, as administrators, were entitled to be paid for their services.

It would be wrong to direct the pension funds to bear any part of the administration costs. If, in a liquidation or administration, it was appropriate to wind up such a scheme, the cost should be met out of any free assets of the company unless the scheme, unusually, provided that the company could charge for acting as trustee.

Where the court would not direct payment out of the trust funds for the administrators there was no justification for directing payment to any substitute trustee unless it could provide significant beneficial services which the administrators could not.

Despite the protestations of conflicts of interest, Mr Trower's submissions boiled down to cost effectiveness. Nothing in the Trustee Corporation's schedule of work in winding up fell outside the competence of a leading firm of City accountants, for which there was no cost to the trust assets under the present regime.

There could even be wasted or duplicated costs, as the administrators had already acted as trustee since August 1996 whereas the Trustee Corporation would have to start anew.

As part of the administration, the administrators were and had been under a duty to discharge PPI's duties as trustee of the schemes without charge on the pension funds.

Since the court was asked only to appoint the Trustee Corporation on terms that they be paid out of the pension funds, it was not expedient to appoint them as substitute trustees.

Solicitor: Cameron McKenna.

Sentencing for obscene article for gain

Regina v Tunnicliffe
Regina v Greenwood

Before Lord Justice Clarke, Mr Justice Thomas and Judge Norman Jones, QC

[Judgment November 26]

When sentencing for an offence of having an obscene article for publication for gain it would not always be necessary to impose an immediate term of custody, particularly where it was a first offence which could not be held to be so serious that only such a sentence could be justified within the meaning of section 1(2)(a) of the Criminal Justice Act 1991.

The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division, so held in allowing appeals by Marcus Tunnicliffe and Paul Greenwood against concurrent prison sentences of two months and three months respectively imposed on November 4, 1998, by Judge Francis Owen at Manchester Crown Court, on their pleas of guilty to three offences of having an obscene article for publication for gain, contrary to section 2(1) of the Obscene Publications Act 1959 and section 1(1) of the Obscene Publications Act 1964.

Mr Philip Rouse, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for Tunnicliffe; Mr Keith Harrison, assigned by the Registrar of Criminal Appeals, for Greenwood.

LORD JUSTICE CLARKE, giving the judgment of the court, said that their Lordships were surprised that this was a matter which came before the crown court and was not dealt with by the magistrates, who apparently declined jurisdiction at the request of the Crown.

Their Lordships would have thought that that kind of case could have been dealt with by the magistrates although they recognised that the Crown was not present before them to make submissions.

Reference had been made to *R v Holloway* ([1982] 4 Cr App R (S) 128) where an appeal against a sentence of six months imprisonment had been dismissed.

Lord Justice Lawton, expressing the judgment in strong terms, said that there had been considerable problems in the West End of London arising out of such activities.

In *R v Pace* ([1998] 1 Cr App R (S) 120) an appeal against a sentence of three months imprisonment was dismissed and the court followed the basic principles set out in *Holloway*.

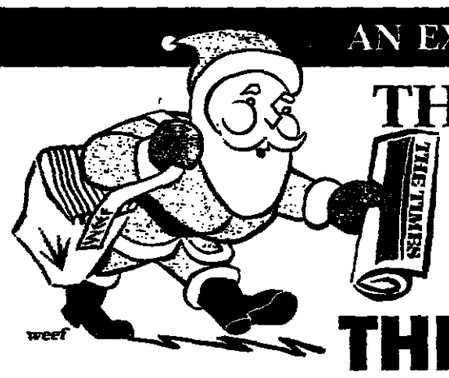
It was expressly conceded in the present case that in the light of those cases the judge was right to impose a sentence of imprisonment. It appeared to their Lordships, however, that there might be circumstances, depending upon the facts of a particular case and the mitigation available to a particular defendant, that it would not always be necessary to impose a sentence of immediate imprisonment.

However, it was conceded that this was not such a case. The question was whether the sentences of two and three months were excessive.

In view of the cases of *R v Ollerenshaw* (*The Times* May 6, 1998) and *R v Howells* (*The Times* August 21, 1998) which held that it was important that the court should pass the shortest possible sentence consistent with its duty to the public, the sentences would be halved.

Tunnicliffe's sentence would be reduced to one month and Greenwood's sentence to six weeks.

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CHANGING TIMES

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Charity Commission CHY-11610 CHARITY: SPIA EDUCATIONAL TRUST REFERENCE: EN/112314/ARC The Charity Commission has made a Scheme to amend the trusts of this charity. A copy can be seen for the next month at the offices of Speechly Bircham, Solicitors, at Bouverie House, 154 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HX (reference JVH) or can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to The Charity Commission, Woodfield House, Tangier, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4BL, quoting the above reference.

LEGAL NOTICES

Hunt Lobser Plc
Registered Number: 2292291.
Nature of business: PAPER, PRINTING AND PUBLISHING.
Trade Classification: IG.
Date of Appointment of Administrative receiver(s): 10th December 1998.
Name of person appointing the administrative receiver(s): Midland Bank Plc.
Joint Administrative Receivers: K.D. Goodman, FCA and K.F. Barry, FCA (office holder no(s) 2407 and 5741) of Leonard Curtis, One Great Cumberland Place, London W1H 8LE.

LEGAL NOTICES

INSOLVENCY RULES 1986
NEWPORT WAFER FAB LIMITED
Registered number: 2739765
Nature of business: Manufacturer semi-conductors
Trade classification: 31
Administration Order made: 3 December 1998
Derek A Howell and Joseph Patrick Considine - joint Administrators (office holder nos 6604 and 7768)

NO 04252 OF 1998
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF COMPEL GROUP PLC
- and -
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) dated the 9th day of December 1998 confirming the cancellation of the above previous account of the above named Company in accordance with the above-mentioned Act was registered by the Registrar of Companies on Friday 11 December 1998.
DATED this 15th day of December 1998
Leyland (ref: RMH), Carnegie, 59 Victoria Embankment, Blackfriars, London EC4Y 0LS, Solicitors for the above-named Company

J CRIMER (DECEITFUL) LIMITED (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION)
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Rule 4.182A(1) of the Insolvency Rules 1986, that the Liquidator of the above named company intends making a distribution to contributories. The creditors of the company are required, on or before 6 January 1999 to prove their debts by sending to the undersigned Robert Stephen Palmer of Gallagher & Co 2nd Floor, Thistle House, 69-85 Tabernacle Street, London EC2A 4RR the Liquidator of the company, written statements of the amounts they claim to be due to them from the company and if so requested, to provide such details or produce such documentary or other evidence as may appear to the Liquidator to be necessary. A creditor who has not proved his debt before the date mentioned above is not entitled to distrub, by reason that he has not participated in, in, the proceeds distribution mentioned above or any other distribution declared before his debt is proved.
Liquidator
R S PALMER

Notice of Administration Order
In the matter of Saltgreen Housing & Co and in the matter of the Insolvent Partnerships Order 1994
Registered number: 2624
Nature of business: Syndicator
Trade classification: 6712
Administration Order made: 10 December 1998
AB Thompson and R Hale
Joint Administrators (office holder nos 6413 and 8618)

No 004460 of 1998
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF GAN UK PLC
- and -
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Order of the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) dated 2 December 1998 confirming the reduction of the capital of the above-named company from £320,000,000 to £200,000,000 and the Minute approved by the Court showing with respect to the capital of the said company as altered the several particulars required by the above-mentioned Act were registered by the Registrar of Companies on 4th December 1998
Dated the 14th day of December 1998
LINKLATERS & PAINES (JYE)
One Silk Street
London EC2Y 8HQ
Solicitors for the above-named company

Woodside Health Care Limited
Registered Number: 1888933
Nursing company name: Northern Caring Homes Limited
Trading Name: Woodside Health Care Limited
Nature of Business: Nursing Home Operator
Trade Classification: 8514
Date of Appointment of Administrative Receiver(s): 1 December 1998
Name of person appointing the Administrative Receiver(s): Bank of Scotland
Type of Security: Fixed and Floating Charge Debenture
Date of Security: 14 September 1989
Names of persons appointed: S V Pembley, 84 Grosvenor Street, London W1K 9DF and I J Chaves, 18 Oxford Court, Bishopsgate, Manchester, M2 3WQ. (Office Holder Nos: 8893 and 6657)

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RACING

Trainers lose out in BHB reshuffle

BY CHRIS MCGRATH

A FIRE at the adjacent social club delayed the start of the 2.50 race at Musselburgh yesterday; at precisely the same time, a smaller one caused the evacuation of the grandstand at Folkestone and the 3.00 race could be run only after commentator and judge were permitted to return to their eyries. For the day's real smouldering, however, one had to turn to the National Trainers' Federation (NTF).

Though the Jockey Club is set to forfeit one of its four seats on the British Horseracing Board (BHB), it was the trainers who considered themselves the real losers after the BHB constitutional review group published its recommendations yesterday. The NTF had urged an end to the distribution of Board places among various industry bodies; if its pleas were to be ignored, however, they jolly well wanted one for themselves.

In the event, the allocation of seats has not only been preserved but extended — embracing the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association (TBA) and not the NTF. This was considered "a kick in the teeth" by Grant Harris, the latter's chief executive. "This was an opportunity to get away from sectional interests," he said. "Instead the balance of power has been changed, and we've been left on an Industry Committee neutered by the removal of three major trade associations, the racecourses, owners and breeders."

The review group — led by the BHB chairman, Peter Savill — has oiled the wheels of decision-making and many of its proposals will condense the power structure to profitable effect. In addition to the TBA, a new seat will be found for an independent director, possibly with a commercial or political background. To accommodate these recruits, the Board will dispense with one Jockey Club director — a reflection of the BHB's continuing evolution — and one of the three nominations by the Industry Committee.

With the Racecourse Association, Racehorse Owners' Association and TBA directly represented on the Board, they will no longer serve on that Committee, and yesterday Savill observed that the NTF would now doubtless emerge as its senior element. To the trainers, that is effectively a measure of their isolation.

Certainly it is possible to discern a shift in the Board's political emphasis, with the TBA likely to share many concerns already represented by the owners. If, as stated, the BHB craved a broader, more democratic base, it would probably have gained a more distinguishable new voice from the trainers.

Savill praised the Jockey Club for yielding to the sport's best interests, adding: "I want to stress that the Board is appreciative of the Jockey Club's contribution, its huge experience and commitment. The perception that there is a desire to squeeze out the Jockey Club is far from the truth."

Declaring that the review sought to render the BHB "more professional, democratic, efficient and united", he acknowledged that its members would sometimes still face a dilemma between the best interests of their own sectors and and those of the sport overall.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: MISTER BLAKE (2.10 Bangor)

Mister Blake is something of a standing dish at Bangor and, after a comfortable success at Newton Abbot recently, looks weighted to win this for the second year running.

Next best: Royale Angela (1.40 Bangor)

BANGOR

THUNDERER

12.40 Muizenberg. 1.10 Tiraldo. 1.40 Bakkar. 2.10 Back Bar. 2.40 Cinema Paradiso. 3.10 Centaur Express. 3.40 Prince Tor.

Timekeeper's top rating: 1.10 TIRALDO.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

12.40 STANLEY LEISURE CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,327: 2m 1f) (15 runners)

101 030/P- MUTANASSIB 261 (BF) (M Jones) M Pipe 5-12-0 ..... G Supple –
102 10/0 TONNERRE 20 (S) (I Goise) B McMahon 6-11-12 ..... S Kelly –
103 624-2 DUNSTON BILL 20 (P Hadfirshead) P Bevan 4-11-7 ..... R Massey 83
104 93013- RIVERBANK ROSE 201 (CD,F,G,S) (Gary Wheildon Syndicate) W Clay 7-11-4 S Durack 99
105 06301/ THE BREWMASTER 655 (S) (J Poynton & J Bower) I Williams 6-11-2 .. R Walley –
106 4-F015 EBEN AL HABEEB 4 (CD,S) (Bankhouse Confederacy) D McCain 7-11-0 .. J Tizzard 93
107 F0-340 WEET AND SEE 13 (E Waeleran (Haulage & Storage)) T Wall 4-10-11 .. X Aizpuru 96
108 3-P336 WEEHEBY 56 (G) (M Barraclough) Miss A Stokell 9-10-11 ..... R McGrath 91
109 42235- DOVETTO 218 (S) (Exors of the late J Price) C J Price 9-10-7 ..... L Cummins 101
110 /35-04 MUIZENBERG 19 (G) (Mrs J Owen) E Owen Jun 11-10-6 ..... Michael Brennan 97
111 000-35 TANSEEQ 21 (CD,G,S) (Miss N Taylor) M Meagher 7-10-2 ..... J Magee 80
112 PRP-06 DAMAS 13 (B,D,F,G,S) (F Wilson) D McCain 7-10-1 ..... A C Coyle –
113 066-00 MADEMIST SAM 29 (M Clarke) P Beaumont 6-10-1 ..... B Grattan 75
114 3P-500 ZAHAALIE 11 (CD,B) (C Wroe) J Pickering 6-10-0 ..... E Husband [illegible]
115 0U2PP- ARIOSO 205 (CD,S) (J Needham) J R Hughes 10-10-0 ..... M Batchelor 86

Long handicap: Zahaalie 9-13, Arioso 9-8.

BETTING: 5-1 Dunston Bill, 11-2 Riverbank Rose, 7-1 Eben Al Habeeb, Dovetto, Muizenberg, 8-1 Mutanassib, 10-1 The Brewmaster, Weeheby, Tanseeq, 16-1 others.

1997: DONTDRESSFORDINNER 7-11-8 T Dascombe (9-1) R Hodges 8 ran

FORM FOCUS Dunston Bill 1½l 2nd of 18 to Sporadic Missile in novice hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, good to soft); previously 21l 4th of 15 to Leviticus in 3yo novice hurdle at Haydock (2m, good). Riverbank Rose 27l 3rd of 10 to Jet Boys in handicap hurdle at Stratford (3m 3f, good); previously beat Dancing Bridge ¾l in 12-runner handicap hurdle at Stratford (3m 3f, good to firm). The Brewmaster beat Mr Poppleton 8l in 10-runner novice handicap hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, good to soft). Eben Al Habeeb beaten a distance last of 5 to Marigliano in handicap hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft); previously beat Distant Storm 1l in 9-runner handicap hurdle at Bangor (2m 1f, soft) with Muizenberg (3lb better off) 3½l 4th. Weet And See 33l 7th of 11 to Bolando in novice hurdle at Leicester (2m, good); previously 21l 4th of 9 to Florentino in maiden hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, good). Weeheby 12l 6th of 12 to Caddy's First in selling handicap chase at Ludlow (2m, good); previously 20l 3rd of 8 to Fortysixanda to handicap chase at Worcester (2m, good). Dovetto 30l 5th of 14 to Specialize in novice handicap hurdle at Hereford (2m 1f, good); previously 34l 3rd of 15 to Bramblehill Duke in novice handicap hurdle at Chepstow (2m 110yd, good). Tanseeq 17l 5th of 8 to Erny in handicap hurdle at Hexham (2m, heavy); previously 12l 3rd of 11 to Just Lizzie in handicap hurdle at Hexham (2m, heavy).

DUNSTON BILL appeals having stepped up on earlier efforts when second on his debut for Peter Bevan

1.10 CLWYD NOVICES CHASE (£3,583: 2m 4f 110yd) (8 runners)

201 /10R/2 MINELLA DERBY 22 (BF,D,S) (B Kilby) P Nicholls 8-11-5 ..... J Tizzard 121
202 2- PLANET IRELAND 235P (J J Racing) R Lee 6-11-5 ..... A Maguire –
203 63-632 RIPARIUS 16 (F,G) (Mrs D Blackburn) P R Webber 7-11-5 ..... J A McCarthy 101
204 F23-22 TIRALDO 22 (S) (Mrs Graham, J Palmer & Mrs Griffith) H Daly 5-11-5 . R Johnson [illegible]
205 /P26/3 TOMS CHOICE 18 (Mrs H Blazey) J Tuck 9-11-5 ..... R Bellamy 93
206 311/44 TOTAL JOY 11 (B,D,G,S) (Mrs M Warren) C Mann 7-11-5 ..... J Magee –
207 112/65 JESSOLLE 31 (D,F,G) (C Fleet) N Richards 6-11-0 ..... A Dobbin –
208 410-13 SAD MAD BAD 12 (D,G,S) (P Savill) Mrs M Reveley 4-10-13 ..... P Niven 109

BETTING: 5-4 Tiraldo, 11-4 Sad Mad Bad, 3-1 Minella Derby, 12-1 Riparius, 20-1 Jessolle, 25-1 Planet Ireland, 33-1 Toms Choice, Total Joy.

1997: BURNT IMP 7-11-8 J Callaghan (4-6 fav) G M Moore 7 ran

FORM FOCUS Minella Derby 1l 2nd of 7 to Rich Tycoon in novice handicap chase at Worcester (2m 4f 110yd, heavy). Riparius 12l 2nd of 7 to Marlborough in novice chase at Worcester (2m 4f 110yd, heavy), previously 20l 3rd of 8 to Retkasder in novice chase at Leicester (2m 1f, good). Tiraldo 4l 2nd of 7 to Ocean Hawk in novice chase grade 2 at Worcester (2m 7f 110yd, heavy); previously short head 2nd of 8 to Irbee in novice chase at Worcester (2m 4f 110yd, good). Toms Choice 22l 3rd of 5 to Desert Mountain in novice chase at Warwick (2m, soft). Total Joy beaten a distance 4th of 6 to Measured Step in novice chase at Chepstow (2m 3f 110yd, good), previously 26l last of 4 to World Express in handicap hurdle at Leicester (2m 4f 110yd, soft). Jessolle 31l 5th of 7 to Cottstown Boy in handicap hurdle at Ayr (2m 4f, good to soft); previously 20l 6th of 7 to Saint Ciel in handicap hurdle at Haydock (2m, soft). Sad Mad Bad 13l 3rd of 5 to Flagship Uberalles in novice chase at Exeter (2m 1f 110yd, good); previously beat El Cordobes a distance in 4-runner novice chase at Market Rasen (2m 4f, soft).

TIRALDO has run into a couple of useful sorts this season but can gain a deserved success here

1.40 TOTE HANDICAP HURDLE (SHOWCASE RACE AND TOTE TRIFECTA RACE) (£6,983: 3m) (9 runners)

301 501-11 ALPINE PANTHER 15 (D,G,S) (P Savill) Mrs M Reveley 5-11-10 ..... P Niven 106
302 114P-4 SESAME SEED 18 (G,S) (R Tooth) N Henderson 10-11-10 ..... M A Fitzgerald –
303 1P5-16 BAKKAR 31 (G,S) (M Burke's 5th Family Settlement) T Easterby 4-11-5 ... A Dobbin 113
304 31-1P6 DOM BELTRANO 25 (D,S) (C Wright) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-7 ..... C Llewellyn 103
305 120-02 ROYALE ANGELA 7 (C,S) (J Neville) J Neville 6-11-4 ..... A P McCoy [illegible]
306 035-11 FLYING GUNNER 21 (D,S) (R Marvyn Green) D Nicholson 7-11-4 ..... R Johnson 105
307 10-041 STEWARTS PRIDE 31 (D,S) (S Riley) S Brookshaw 5-10-7 ..... C Maude 90
308 50-1F1 SLEEPY RIVER 16 (G,S) (J McManus) J J O'Neill 7-10-0 ..... R McGrath 123
309 0660/5 RIMOUSKI 11 (CD,G) (S Cambidge) B Cambidge 10-10-0 ..... H Oliver (5) 31

Long handicap: Sleepy River 9-12, Rimouski 8-7.

BETTING: 11-4 Alpine Panther, 7-2 Flying Gunner, Royale Angela, 5-1 Sleepy River, 7-1 Stewarts Pride, 10-1 Dom Beltrano, 12-1 Bakkar, 14-1 Sesame Seed, 66-1 Rimouski.

1997: DEANO'S BEENO 5-11-10 A P McCoy (2-9 fav) M Pipe 5 ran

FORM FOCUS Alpine Panther beat Palace Of Gold 2l in 8-runner handicap hurdle at Newcastle (3m, soft); previously beat Auburn Boy 6l in 5-runner claiming hurdle at Plumpton (2m 4f, good to soft). Sesame Seed beaten a distance 4th of 5 to Churchtown Glen in handicap hurdle at Haydock (2m 6f, soft). Bakkar 26l 6th of 13 to Lady Rebecca in handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 5f, good) with Dom Beltrano (3lb better off) pulled up. Dom Beltrano beaten a distance 6th of 9 to Brave Tornado in handicap hurdle at Ascot (3m, good to soft). Royale Angela 6l 2nd of 6 to Texatrai in handicap hurdle at Leicester (2m 4f 110yd, soft). Flying Gunner beat Bankhead 3l in 8-runner handicap hurdle at Chepstow (3m, good to soft) with Royale Angela (7lb better off) beaten a distance 7th. Stewarts Pride beat Young Thruster 6l in 7-runner novice hurdle at Towcester (3m, soft); previously 26l 4th of 15 to Mystera in maiden hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m 6f 110yd, soft). Sleepy River beat The Mad Waltz 1l in 4-runner handicap hurdle at Kelso (2m 6f 110yd, heavy). Rimouski 39l 5th of 7 to Double Sevite in handicap hurdle at Towcester (3m, soft).

STEWARTS PRIDE showed himself well suited by a test of stamina last time and can follow up

2.10 HALEWOOD INTERNATIONAL LAMBRINI BIANCO HANDICAP CHASE (£4,299: 4m 1f) (12 runners)

401 /PUP-2 NAZZARO 37 (B,CD,S) (Gongolfin) W G M Turner 9-11-10 ..... A P McCoy 106
402 6600-3 BACK BAR 25 (G,S) (F Wilson) D McCain 10-11-7 ..... T J Murphy 12
403 125-P4 LOTTERY TICKET 16 (B,G,S) (A Parkes) T George 9-10-11 ..... R Walley [illegible]
404 32-321 MISTER BLAKE 29 (CD,F,G,S) (W Edwards) R Lee 8-10-6 ..... A Maguire 124
405 12/06P MISTER TRICK 9 (B,F,G) (E Birkbeck) L Lungo 8-10-4 ..... R Supple 89
406 63-646 ROYAL ARCTIC 22 (V,G,S) (T Syder) S Mellor 8-10-0 ..... C Webb 102
407 11313- KENTUCKY GOLD 223 (G,S) (Halewood International) Mrs L Williamson 9-10-0 S Wynne 101
408 52F4/5 THREE SAINTS 30 (B,C,S) (Dowager Countess Cadogan) H Daly 9-10-0 R Johnson 106
409 21-24P BALLY LIRA 15 (S) (V Thorne) P Bradford 6-10-0 ..... S Burrough 116
410 -421F3 GOLDEN DRUM 23 (S) (McMahon (Services) Ltd) J O'Shea 8-10-0 . Michael Brennan 113
411 5P40-0 PINK GIN 14 (V,D,F,G,S) (Mrs M Francis) M Meagher 11-10-0 ..... R Thornton 104
412 P-5045 GLEN OAK 64 (G,S) (Mrs S Johnson) D Duggan 13-10-0 ..... H Oliver (5) 100

Long handicap: Kentucky Gold 9-12, Three Saints 9-12, Bally Lira 9-10, Golden Drum 9-10, Pink Gin 9-10, Glen Oak 9-0.

BETTING: 9-4 Mister Blake, 5-2 Nazzaro, 10-1 Lottery Ticket, Mister Trick, Royal Arctic, 12-1 Back Bar, 14-1 Kentucky Gold, Golden Drum, 16-1 others.

1997: MISTER BLAKE 7-10-5 R Thornton (5-1) R Lee 9 ran

FORM FOCUS Nazzaro 3l 2nd of 6 to Grosvenor in handicap chase at Fontwell (3m 2f 110yd, soft) with Golden Drum (3lb better off) fell. Back Bar beaten a distance 3rd of 8 to Earth Summit in handicap chase at Aintree (3m 3f, good to soft), previously 21l 7th of 15 to Learnbog in handicap chase at Down Royal (3m, good). Lottery Ticket 45l 4th of 6 to Rightsaidfred in handicap chase at Folkestone (3m 2f, good to soft). Mister Blake beat Gigi Beach 8l in 8-runner handicap chase at Newton Abbot (3m 2f 110yd, good to soft), previously ½l 2nd of 8 to Golden Drum (6lb worse off) in handicap chase at Stratford (3m 4f, good to soft). Mister Trick pulled up in handicap chase at Ayr (3m 5f, soft), previously 41l 6th of 13 to Zamhareer in amateur handicap chase at Sedgefield (3m 3f, good to soft). Royal Arctic 22l 6th of 11 to Hopeful Lord in novice handicap chase at Market Rasen (3m 1f, heavy). Kentucky Gold beaten a distance 3rd of 10 to Finch's Gem in novice hunter chase at Bangor (3m 110yd, good to soft), previously beat Pantara Prince ¾l in 15-runner hunter chase at Hexham (3m 1f, heavy). Three Saints 17l 5th of 11 to Church Law in handicap chase at Leicester (2m 7l 110yd, good). Golden Drum 3½l 3rd of 9 to Glaisnock Lad in novice handicap chase at Ludlow (3m, good). Pink Gin 37l 13th of 22 to Sharp Command in handicap chase at Catterick (3m 1f 110yd, good).

MISTER BLAKE ran out an easy winner latest and remains well treated on a 5lb higher mark

2.40 ASTBURY WREN NOVICES HURDLE (£2,358: 2m 1f) (14 runners)

501 65-1 TAIN TON 18 (S) (Mrs S Tanson) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-5 ..... C Llewellyn 55
502 0- ALTHREY RULER 214 (F Lloyd) F Lloyd 5-10-12 ..... Sophie Mitchell –
503 00- CHADWICK BANK 217 (S Nixon) C McCourt 4-10-12 ..... D Fort (3) –
504 4F CINEMA PARADISO 9 (E Melville) N Richards 4-10-12 ..... A Dobbin 62
505 3 FINISTERRE 9 (Les Femmes Fatales) J J O'Neill 5-10-12 ..... R McGrath [illegible]
506 GRAND MUSICA 77F (Towcester Members) M Wilkinson 5-10-12 . W Marston –
507 HEROS FATAL 87F (F Fanani) M Pipe 4-10-12 ..... A P McCoy –
508 00/ PACKITIN PARKY 590 (A A Packaging Ltd) D McCain 5-10-12 ..... T J Murphy –
509 44 POLAR CHAMP 18 (D Stoddart) N Gaselee 5-10-12 ..... A Thornton 85
510 SCALP 508F (R Pooley) D Duggan 6-10-12 ..... H Oliver (5) –
511 30-0 GRANNY RICH 27 (P Rich) P Rich 4-10-7 ..... S Kelly (5) –
512 P5 ISIT IZZY 20 (Mrs A Beard) B McMahon 6-10-7 ..... A Maguire 44
513 00-P MERRY CHRISTMAS 28 (E Owen) E Owen Jun 5-10-7 ..... Michael Brennan –
514 000/0 SINGING SCALLY 19 (S Adams) W Clay 7-10-7 ..... G Tormey 23

BETTING: 5-4 Heros Fatal, 5-2 Tain Ton, 9-2 Finisterre, 8-1 Polar Champ, 14-1 Cinema Paradiso, 20-1 Grand Musica, 33-1 Scalp, Granny Rich, Isit Izzy, Merry Christmas, 50-1 others.

1997: ZAHAALIE 5-11-5 W Marston (9-1) J Pickering 13 ran

FORM FOCUS Tain Ton beat Don Fayruz 2½l in 9-runner novice hurdle at Warwick (2m, soft) with Polar Champ (7lb better off) 23l 4th. Althrey Ruler 45l 10th of 17 to Time For Action in novice hurdle at Bangor (2m 1f, good). Chadwick Bank 39l 9th of 12 to Gunlibie Guy in national hunt flat race at Chepstow (2m 110yd, good to firm). Finisterre 3½l 3rd of 13 to Rapier in novice hurdle at Ayr (2m, soft) with Cinema Paradiso (levels) fell. Heros Fatal won his only 1m7f race in France. Isit Izzy 20l 5th of 16 to Sporadic Missile in novice hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, good to soft). Singing Scally 41l 8th of 12 to Powder Hound in novice hurdle at Bangor (2m 1f, soft).

TAIN TON was having his first start for two years when winning on his hurdling bow and can progress further

3.10 BODFARI STUD HANDICAP CHASE (£4,299: 2m 4f 110yd) (7 runners)

601 61-F3P DENICHEUR 33 (G) (Mrs W Morrell) Mrs L Taylor 7-12-0 ..... R Bellamy 115
602 33122- STEP ON EYRE 210 (BF,D,G,S) (Duchess of Westminster) H Daly 8-11-9 .. R Johnson 111
603 342P-1 EVEN BLUE 19 (CD,S) (Mrs C Black) Mrs C Black 10-11-8 ..... S Wynne 122
604 5P4-6F DISTINCTIVE 7 (CD,G,S) (J Hancock) M Wilkinson 9-11-4 ..... C Llewellyn 110
605 426-0P BRAMBLEBERRY 25 (CD,F,G,S) (Hampers Racing) Mrs S Smith 9-11-2 S Durack 108
606 2F3-51 CENTAUR EXPRESS 22 (C,G,S) (Centaur Racing) A Streeter 6-10-13 .. A Thornton [illegible]
607 41F6-2 HIGH MOOD 16 (G,S) (M Opperman) T George 8-10-0 ..... R Walley 110

Long handicap: High Mood 9-4.

BETTING: 13-8 Centaur Express, 11-4 Step On Eyre, 6-1 Distinctive, 7-1 Even Blue, 10-1 High Mood, 12-1 Brambleberry, 14-1 Denicheur.

1997: JYMJAM JOHNNY 8-11-8 A P McCoy (11-8 fav) J J O'Neill 5 ran

FORM FOCUS Denicheur pulled up in cross country at Cheltenham (3m 7f, good) previously 16l 3rd of 5 to Mouse Bird in handicap chase at Stratford (2m 1f 110yd, good to soft). Step On Eyre 5l 2nd of 4 to King Of Sparta in novice chase at Uttoxeter (2m 5f, good to firm), previously 13l 2nd of 8 to Gaelhcon in novice chase at Towcester (2m 6f, good to soft). Even Blue 29l 4th of 6 to Welsh March in handicap chase at Bangor (2m 4f 110yd, soft). Distinctive fell in handicap chase at Leicester (2m 7f 110yd, good), previously 41l 6th of 7 to Sierra Bay in handicap chase at Huntingdon (2m 4f 110yd, good to firm). Brambleberry pulled up in handicap chase at Aintree (2m 4f, good to soft), previously 27l 7th of 9 to Master Glory in handicap chase at Newcastle (2m 4f, good to soft). Centaur Express beat Byp 3l in 4-runner handicap chase at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, heavy), previously 23l 5th of 10 to Tashreef in handicap hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, soft). High Mood 14l 2nd of 6 to Play Games in handicap chase at Worcester (2m, heavy), previously 53l 6th of 16 to Master Mario in novice handicap chase at Leicester (2m 4f 110yd, good).

EVEN BLUE appeared to need the outing on his reappearance and is expected to leave that form behind

3.40 PATRICK BURLING DEVELOPMENTS OPEN N.H. FLAT (£1,266: 2m 1f) (9 runners)

1 0 ARCTIC KING 68 (D Cowgill) J O'Shea 5-11-4 ..... Michael Brennan 19
2 ARCTIC KNIGHT (Mrs H Jones) H Daly 5-11-4 ..... R Johnson –
3 0 JOHNNY JOE 15 (Currie Group) L Lungo 5-11-4 ..... Mr B Gibson (7) [illegible]
4 5 NAVARONE 25 (BF) (A Cressel) N Twiston-Davies 4-11-4 ..... C Llewellyn 60
5 6-5 PRINCE TOR 55 (K Condliffe) S Brookshaw 5-11-4 ..... X Aizpuru (3) 28
6 060- ROCKY MY BOY 261 (J Henderson (Co Durham)) Mrs S Smith 4-11-4 .. S Durack 50
7 S AND D P (D Manning Associates) M Pipe 4-11-4 ..... S Wynne –
8 SIMBER HILL (J Brown) D Nicholson 4-11-4 ..... R Massey –
9 0- QUITE A LADY 306 (J Cresswell) J K Cresswell 5-10-13 ..... L Corcoran (7) –

BETTING: 5-2 Navarone, 11-4 S And D P, 4-1 Simber Hill, 5-1 Johnny Joe, 8-1 Arctic Knight, 12-1 others

1997: BASSEY 4-11-4 M A Fitzgerald (2-1) N Henderson 15 ran

FORM FOCUS Arctic King 37l 8th of 13 to Long Lunch in national hunt flat race at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, good to firm). Johnny Joe 13l 7th of 21 to Time of Flight in national hunt flat race at Newcastle (2m, soft). Navarone 13l 5th of 13 to Itsonlyme in national hunt flat race at Aintree (2m 110yd, good to soft). Prince Tor 24l 5th of 11 to Route Two in national hunt flat race at Ludlow (2m, good). Rocky My Boy beaten a distance 18th of 20 to Scotmail Lad in maiden nat hunt flat at Hexham (2m, good), previously 19l 6th of 8 to Twenty Winks in national hunt flat race at Catterick (2m, soft). S And D P Arctic Lord gelding out of a lightly-raced mare. Simber Hill Pharly gelding, half-brother to winning jumper Bone Setter.

NAVARONE failed to justify favouritism on his racecourse bow but hinted at ability

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
M Pipe	29	104	27.9	J Magee	4	13	30.8
D Nicholson	15	54	27.8	A McCoy	14	60	23.3
P R Webber	6	23	26.1	A Maguire	13	58	22.4
L Lungo	4	16	25.0	R McGrath	3	14	21.4
C Mann	5	27	18.5	C Llewellyn	12	70	17.1

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Bangor: 1.10 Total Joy 2.10 Lottery Ticket. **Catterick:** 2.30 Commanche Trix. 3.00 Ballad Minstrel. 3.30 Prolific Agency. **Wolverhampton:** 1.50 Abusamrah. 2.20 Campari. 3.20 Little Boy Blue. 4.20 Baby Spice, Shalyah.

Balding signs Fallon



Fallon: champion jockey

IAN BALDING has secured second claim on Kieren Fallon's services next year. Fallon, the champion jockey, is attached to Henry Cecil's Newmarket stable, but has signed an agreement to ride for Balding when not required by his principal employer.

Also, the up-and-coming apprentice, Adrian Nicholls, will be moving to Balding's Kingsclere base. The son of trainer David Nicholls, he was with Barry Hills's yard last season.

Andrew Balding has joined his father as assistant trainer after two seasons with Jack and Lynda Ramsden, who retired from training last month.

CATTERICK

THUNDERER

1.00 River Don. 1.30 Ibn Masirah. 2.00 Dragons Bay. 2.30 Barley Meadow. 3.00 Silly Money. 3.30 RUSSIAN ASPECT (nap).

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS

1.00 HELISTER NOVICES CHASE (£3,305: 3m 1f 110yd) (11 runners)

1 -421 BOLD ACTION 21 (D,F,S) J Turner 7-11-5 ..... J Supple 105
2 1-P5 BELLE BUSK 22 (D,G,S) Mrs S Smith 6-11-0 . R Wilkinson (5) 92
3 -P02 CASEY CASEY 13 H Alexander 9-10-12 ..... Mr T J Barry (7) 71
4 1P/P HANCOCK 9 (G) J Hetherton 8-10-12 ..... J Callaghan –
5 5-0P HOWYOUDOING 21 S Kettlewell 8-10-12 ..... B Storey 86
6 05/P JORIDI LE FORIGE 33 (B) F Murphy 7-10-12 ..... C O'Dwyer –
7 U-34 MISTER MUDDYPAWS 48 (F) J H Johnson 8-10-12 ... A Smith 103
8 6-32 RIVER DON 47 (F) M W Easterby 6-10-12 ..... R Garritty 81
9 302- RYE RUM 241P J Aynsley 7-10-12 ..... D Parker –
10 -220 SCOTTON GREEN 11 (G,S) T Easterby 7-10-12 ... L Wyer [illegible]
11 -666 JOE SHAW 25 (G) Mrs M Reveley 5-10-11 ..... G Lee 77

11-10 River Don, 5-2 Scotton Green, 8-1 Bold Action, 10-1 Mister Muddypaws, Joe Shaw, 16-1 Belle Busk, 20-1 Casey Casey, 33-1 others.

1.30 CATTERICK CLUB 1999 JOIN UP NOW AMATEURS HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,008: 2m 3f) (9)

1 0160 EN-JAY-BEE 100 (S) M Hammond 4-12-0 ... P Griffiths (7) –
2 0-5P RING OF VISION 27 (F) J J Quinn 6-11-9 ..... S Swiers 51
3 13U- FLAT TOP 224 (S) M W Easterby 7-11-8 ..... M Watson (7) –
4 123/ SUPERHOO 806 (C,D,S) R Craggs 7-11-2 . Miss N Craggs (7) –
5 P0-0 IBN MASIRAH 20 (B,S) Mrs Reveley 4-10-9 . T Comerford (7) 96
6 0-05 CRABBIE'S PRIDE 22 (CD,S) Mrs Smith 5-10-5 J Crowley (7) [illegible]
7 5316 MAREMMA 36 (S) Miss K Milligan 4-10-2 ... S Strange (7) 91
8 0544 SQUIRE'S OCCASION 6 (B,F) R Ford 5-10-0 .. Mrs C Ford (7) 87
9 F060 SAFECRACKER 11 (F) T Etherington 5-10-0 E Babington (7) 71

7-2 Flat Top, 5-1 Superhoo, 6-1 Ring Of Vision, 7-1 Maremma, 8-1 others.

2.00 CHRISTMAS HANDICAP CHASE (£2,808: 2m 3f) (17)

1 -1F6 HEAVY HUSTLER 27 (F,S) J Howard Johnson 7-12-0 ..... C McCormack (5) 100
2 -1F5 BALLESWHIDDEN 25 (B,S) R Fahey 6-11-9 ... E Callaghan 109
3 22P- MR FUDGE 305 (CD,G) M Sowersby 11-11-6 M Naughton (5) 104
4 0-30 LA RIVIERA 14 (F) J Charlton 6-11-3 ..... B Storey [illegible]
5 -553 OWENS QUEST 25 (F,G,S) T Etherington 8-11-2 ... L Wyer 98
6 -P00 KINGS SERMON 14 (B,G,S) P Beaumont 9-11-2 ... J Supple 110
7 -0P6 DESERT BRAVE 25 (CD,G,S) Mrs S Smith 8-10-13 ..... Mr J Crowley (7) 100
8 64-0 ANOTHER RED 158 (C,F,S) W Raw 10-10-10 ... J Callaghan 75
9 F-P3 FILS DE CRESSON 31 J Adam 8-10-10 ..... B Powell 98
10 6-0P DAWN LAD 27 (F,G) Miss S Wilkinson 9-10-9 . R Guest 62
11 1-F0 LARKSHILL 22 (S) J FitzGerald 7-10-8 ..... D Byrne –
12 451- JOE JAGGER 383 (CD,G) M Hammond 7-10-8 ... B Harding 84
13 U30- NO SUCH PARSON 291P Mrs Buckley 8-10-7 N Horrocks (5) –
14 -13P DRAGONS BAY 40 (BF,G) Mrs M Reveley 9-10-3 . G Lee 105
15 P46- BOYZONTOOWA 228 (F) W Storey 6-10-3 ..... S Taylor 78
16 3134 USLAUGHTIN ABBEY 40 (S) J Mackie 6-10-1 ..... T Eley 98
17 03-2 CORBLEU 27 (CD,G) S Bell 8-10-0 ..... K Johnson 99

13-2 Fils De Cresson, 7-1 Joe Jagger, 8-1 Balleswhidden, La Riviera, Dragons Bay, Uslaughtin Abbey, 10-1 Mr Fudge, Owens Quest, Corbleu, 14-1 others.

2.30 RAFFYARD HOUSE SELLING HURDLE (£1,495: 2m 3f) (8)

1 6124 BARLEY MEADOW 12 (V,G) R Ford 6-11-5 N Horrocks (5) 85
2 0 DESERT CAT 15 M Wane 5-10-12 ..... B Harding –
3 0 JACK FLUSH 99F B Rothwell 4-10-12 ..... A S Smith –
4 0404 OVERSMAN 8 (B,S) J FitzGerald 5-10-12 ..... L Wyer [illegible]
5 364 CHANSON D'AMOUR 25 M Hammond 4-10-7 ... D Bentley 80
6 0-P COMMANCHE TRIX 9 (B) J J O'Neill 5-10-7 . L Cooper (7) –
7 00-0 HOLDERNESS GIRL 15 L L-James 5-10-7 . M Naughton (5) –
8 P-PR PRIMROSE HILL 36 H Alexander 5-10-7 ..... T Siddall (5) –

5-4 Oversman, 2-1 Barley Meadow, 7-2 Chanson D'Amour, 16-1 Jack Flush, 20-1 Commanche Trix, 25-1 Desert Cat, Holderness Girl, 66-1 Primrose Hill.

3.00 GARTH NOVICES CHASE (£3,149: 2m) (10)

1 135P ALPINE HIDEAWAY 18 (D,F) M W Easterby 5-10-12 . F Leahy –
2 4-22 BALLAD MINSTREL 25 (B,D,G,S) J FitzGerald 6-10-12 L Wyer [illegible]
3 31-2 EL CORDOBES 32 (S) Mrs Buckley 7-10-12 C McCormack (5) –
4 66-3 FASSAN 25 (D,S) M Hammond 6-10-12 ..... B Harding 97
5 0/P- FOX SPARROW 237 (D,S) B Mactaggart 8-10-12 .. B Storey –
6 005 INDEPENDENT GREY 22 Mrs Smith 7-10-12 . R Wilkinson (5) –
7 1-2U QUEENS BRIGADE 2 (S) F Walton 6-10-12 ..... D Parker 87
8 -425 RADANPOUR 15 (D,G,S) J H Johnson 6-10-12 .. A S Smith –
9 1-3F SILLY MONEY 47 (D,G) T Easterby 7-10-12 ..... R Garritty 129
10 5P-F YELAPA PRINCE 29 (S) F Kirby 7-10-12 ..... J Supple –

Evens Ballad Minstrel, 7-4 Silly Money, 10-1 Fassan, 14-1 El Cordobes, Queens Brigade, 16-1 Radanpour, 33-1 Alpine Hideaway, 50-1 others.

3.30 HUTTON WANDESLEY NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,050: 2m) (16)

1 -223 RUSSIAN ASPECT 11 M W Easterby 4-12-0 C McCormack (5) 84
2 40-0 HIBERNATE 14 J Howard Johnson 4-11-3 ..... D Parker 43
3 -035 DE ORALIE 15 B Ellison 5-11-2 ..... J Callaghan 56
4 0-P6 FATHER EDDIE 6 (B) M Sowersby 4-10-9 ..... A S Smith [illegible]
5 4-00 JONA HOLLEY 16 M Hammond 5-10-8 ..... B Harding 73
6 2-5P DAMIEN'S CHOICE 103 P Eccles 6-10-8 ..... D Byrne 71
7 0-0P MENDELUCI 76 L Lloyd-James 6-10-7 . M H Naughton (5) 42
8 P-P0 ELLIOTT THE BUTLER 14 Mrs Smith 6-10-6 . R Wilkinson (5) 29
9 -01F STRAFFAN GOLD 12 (B) Mrs Reveley 4-10-5 . A Dempsey (3) 78
10 P040 MILAN KING 52 A J Lockwood 5-10-4 ..... Miss A Deniel 92
11 -5U0 SHANNON SHOON 15 Mrs S Smith 6-10-4 . Mr J Crowley (7) 36
12 66-0 PROLIFIC AGENCY 46 (B) F Murphy 5-10-1 ... C O'Dwyer 54
13 -460 PERKS OF THE JOB 25 F Murtagh 6-10-1 ..... L O'Hara 73
14 P00- GILLEEN LAD 208 J Upson 6-10-0 ..... J Supple 46
15 0060 NORTHERN FLASH 11 (B) J Haynes 4-10-0 ... T Siddall (5) 85
16 0/00 FIRST GOLD 48 A Smith 9-10-0 ..... B Storey 53

5-2 Straffan Gold, 4-1 Russian Aspect, 8-1 De Oralie, Jona Holley, Milan King, 10-1 Damien's Choice, 12-1 Shannon Shoon, 16-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

CATTERICK: Trainers: R Fahey, 3 winners from 8 runners, 37.5%; T Easterby, 9 from 32, 28.1%; Mrs M Reveley, 24 from 107, 22.4%; J J Quinn, 7 from 39, 17.9%; J FitzGerald, 8 from 48, 16.7%; J Charlton, 9 from 58, 15.5%. Jockeys: T Eley, 5 winners from 26 rides, 19.2%; R Garritty, 16 from 92, 17.4%; R Guest, 11 from 64, 17.2%; N Horrocks, 6 from 36, 16.7%; J Callaghan, 10 from 69, 14.5%; A S Smith, 13 from 91, 14.3%.

WOLVERHAMPTON: Trainers: W Jarvis, 12 winners from 37 runners, 32.4%; M Johnston, 61 from 279, 21.9%; R Johnson Houghton, 3 from 14, 21.4%; P Felgate, 10 from 51, 19.6%; J Pearce, 20 from 104, 19.2%; B Murray, 3 from 17, 17.6%; S Woods, 12 from 73, 16.4%. Jockeys: P Bradley, 5 winners from 24 rides, 20.8%; W Ryan, 11 from 65, 16.9%; G Faulkner, 8 from 56, 14.3%; Dane O'Neill, 15 from 108, 13.9%; J Tate, 14 from 101, 13.9%; G Carter, 34 from 247, 13.8%; C Lowther, 18 from 131, 13.7%.

WOLVERHAMPTON

THUNDERER

12.45 Il Principe. 1.15 Chemcast. 1.50 Yanomami. 2.20 The Wyandotte Inn. 2.50 Peruvian Star. 3.20 Miss Take. 3.50 Imperial Prince. 4.20 Time Of Night.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

12.45 CUCKMERE HANDICAP (Div I: £1,872: 1m 6f 166yd) (9 runners)

1 0333 IL PRINCIPE 15 (B,F,G,S) John Berry 4-10-0 ... P Dobbs (7) 4
2 0050 ARCTIC THUNDER 30 (F,G,S) B Palling 7-9-13 G Faulkner (3) 3
3 4356 NIKITA'S STAR 149 (C,F) M Bittan 5-9-6 ..... G Bardwell 5
4 6405 COLERIDGE 14 (B,D,F,G,S) J Sheehan 10-9-1 J Wilson (7) 1
5 5404 HILLZAH 11 (C,F,G,S) R Bastiman 10-8-10 ..... L Newton 6
6 6450 GENERAL GLOW 5 (F) P Evans 5-8-5 ..... Dane O'Neill 7
7 0002 CATCHMENT 23 Mrs A Perrett 4-8-2 ..... A Clark 9
8 3040 ROYAL CIRCUS 14J (F,S) P Hiatt 9-7-10 ... C Cogan (7) 2
9 600 APRIL SPIRIT 23 R Hollinshead 3-7-10 ..... P M Quinn (7) 8

5-4 Il Principe, 9-2 Catchment, 6-1 Hillzah, 8-1 Arctic Thunder, 10-1 others

1.15 TRENT APPRENTICES HANDICAP (£1,903: 5f) (10)

1 2114 SOAKED 14 (BF,D,F,G) D Chapman 5-10-0 S Finnamore (5) 1
2 1P00 DOUBLE-O 30 (B,CD) W Jarvis 4-10-0 ... D McGaffin (3) 2
3 2400 TIME TO FLY 201 (B,CD) B Murray 5-9-12 ..... R Studholme 8
4 0020 SIHAFI 19 (BF,C,D,F,G) D Nicholls 5-9-12 ... P Goode (3) 9
5 0246 JUWWI 30 (CD,F) J Bradley 4-9-9 ..... C Carver (3) 10
6 0131 PRIDE OF BRIXTON 4 (CD,G) P Evans 5-9-2 (7ex) C Cogan (5) 5
7 3056 FEATHERSTONE LANE 14 (CD,F) Miss L Siddall 7-8-9 ..... R FitzPatrick 4
8 5014 MARY JANE 14 (CD,F) J Berry 3-8-4 ... Mette Hanssen (7) 6
9 5000 CHEMCAST 11 (B,D,F,S) J Eyre 5-7-10 ..... P Bradley (3) 3
10 3304 SOTONIAN 11 (CD) P Felgate 5-7-10 ..... P M Quinn (5) 7

3-1 Soaked, 7-2 Sihafi, 5-1 Pride Of Brixton, 8-1 Juwwi, 10-1 Double-O, 12-1 others.

1.50 RIVER IDLE MAIDEN STAKES (£2,671: 6f) (7)

1 0000 ABUSAMRAH 11 (V) A T Murphy 3-9-0 ..... J Gracey (7) 1
2 5202 DRYAD 4 N Littmoden 3-9-0 ..... T G McLaughlin 5
3 3000 NOBLE PATRIOT 11 R Hollinshead 3-9-0 ..... T Williams 7
4 0 ATHENIAN HEIGHTS 33 M Waring 3-8-9 ..... R Price 4
5 0000 CHINABERRY 93 M Brittain 4-8-9 ..... G Bardwell 6
6 000 MARY HANNAH 14 A Senior 5-8-9 ..... R Lappin 3
7 0006 YANOMAMI 34 J Berry 3-8-9 ..... G Carter 2

1-2 Dryad, 3-1 Yanomami, 10-1 Chinaberry, 20-1 Noble Patriot, 25-1 others.

2.20 BSS INDUSTRIAL HEATING & PIPELINE EQUIPMENT HANDICAP (Div I: £1,903: 7f) (12)

1 2006 ROI DE DANSE 11 (G) M Quinn 3-10-0 ..... Dane O'Neill 6
2 5010 VILLAGE NATIVE 74 (B,C,F,S) K C-Brown 5-10-0 G Carter 5
3 1034 INDIAN BLAZE 4 (S) D Elsworth 4-9-12 ..... P Goode (7) 2
4 3006 THE WYANDOTTE INN 21 (B,C,D) R Hodges 4-9-10 ..... Amanda Sanders 7
5 0001 ACID TEST 9 (D,F) M A Buckley 3-9-8 (6ex) R FitzPatrick (5) 10
6 0006 ERUPT 99 (D,G,S) M Brittain 5-9-7 ..... G Bardwell 11
7 0000 NIGHT AUCTION 9 (S) B Palling 3-9-6 ..... G Faulkner (3) 8
8 4064 MIKE'S DOUBLE 9 (V,CD,G) Mrs N Macauley 4-9-4 R Price 12
9 0040 CAMPARI 19 (B) J Pearce 3-9-2 ..... A Polli (5) 4
10 0500 DUDLEY ALLEN 82 T Clement 3-8-13 ... T G McLaughlin 1
11 0006 MAC'S DREAM 9 A Carroll 3-8-12 ..... M Tebbutt 9
12 0604 ESSANDESS 26 J Eyre 3-8-11 ..... C Lowther 3

11-4 Indian Blaze, 3-1 Acid Test, 6-1 Village Native, 7-1 Erupt, 10-1 The Wyandotte Inn, 12-1 Mike's Double, 14-1 Roi De Danse, Night Auction, Essandess, 20-1 others.

2.50 THAMES NURSERY HANDICAP (2-Y-O: £2,857: 7f) (8)

1 21 PERUVIAN STAR 11 (C) N Littmoden 9-7 ... R Smith (7) 2
2 3411 DONE AND DUSTED 7 (D) R Brotherton 8-8 (6ex) P Bradley (7) 4
3 5010 ZECHARIAH 15 (C) J Eyre 7-12 ..... J Quinn 8
4 4046 DEAC'S PET 30 M Johnston 7-12 ..... J Lowe 3
5 3000 WEET U THERE 19 R Hollinshead 7-11 ... P M Quinn (7) 6
6 6306 IPCRESS FILLY 77 J Eustace 7-11 ..... A Polli (5) 7
7 3000 LUCKY RED 22 Pat Mitchell 7-10 ..... G Bardwell 1
8 0023 OH SO GRAND 9 (V) R Cowell 7-10 ..... Dale Gibson 5

2-1 Peruvian Star, 7-2 Done And Dusted, 11-2 Zechariah, 7-1 Deac's Pet, 8-1 Ipcress Filly, Oh So Grand, 12-1 Weet U There, 16-1 Lucky Red.

3.20 SEVERN SELLING STAKES (2-Y-O: £1,893: 7f) (11)

1 3344 ALANA'S CAVALIER 15 R Hollinshead 8-11 ... T Williams 11
2 0000 FOURTH TIME LUCKY 28 B Murray 8-11 R Studholme (5) 1
3 000 LITTLE BOY BLUE 25 (B) M Waring 8-11 ..... R Price 10
4 2421 MISS TAKE 4 (V,C) P Evans 8-11 ..... T G McLaughlin 8
5 0400 POKEIT 34 N Littmoden 8-11 ..... J Tate 9
6 0005 THE LAST WORD 26 R Hollinshead 8-11 ..... W Ryan 5
7 0 DIAMOND BLUSH 127 N Littmoden 8-6 ..... R Lappin 3
8 0300 HARQUEBUSIER 11 J Pearce 8-6 ..... G Bardwell 6
9 0600 MAID PLANS 11 N Littmoden 8-6 ..... R Smith (7) 7
10 0006 RUSSIAN VELVET 9 M Quinn 8-6 ..... J P Spencer (3) 4
11 4000 SKYMISTRESS 26 M Dods 8-6 ..... Dale Gibson 2

5-4 Miss Take, 4-1 Alana's Cavalier, 8-1 Pokeit, 10-1 The Last Word, 12-1 others.

3.50 CUCKMERE HANDICAP (Div II: £1,872: 1m 6f 166yd) (8)

1 4411 PARADISE NAVY 14 (B,C,G) C Egerton 9-10-0 . R Winston (3) 4
2 3035 ALDWYCH ARROW 42 (F,S) M A Buckley 3-9-9 A Culhane 2
3 6053 ROYAL ROULETTE 14 Miss B Sanders 4-9-1 ..... A Clark 3
4 6020 IMPERIAL PRINCE 15 S Woods 3-9-0 ..... W Ryan 7
5 8004 NEW YORKER 14 (V) Miss A Stokell 3-8-6 ..... C Lowther 5
6 0026 PERTEMPS MISSION 30 (V,F) J Pearce 4-8-5 ..... R Price 6
7 6030 BLUE ANCHOR 13J A Carroll 3-7-13 ..... P M Quinn (7) 1
8 0050 TIGGY SILVANO 5 M Quinn 3-7-10 ..... C Cogan (7) 8

2-1 Paradise Navy, 9-2 Royal Roulette, 5-1 New Yorker, Aldwych Arrow, 7-1 others.

4.20 BSS INDUSTRIAL HEATING & PIPELINE EQUIPMENT HANDICAP (Div II: £1,893: 7f) (12)

1 16d4 SALTY BEHAVIOUR 7 (D,F,S) P Evans 4-10-0 .. C Cogan (7) 7
2 3403 TIME OF NIGHT 11 (CD) J Eyre 5-9-13 ..... R Lappin 8
3 4401 C-HARRY 30 (CD,G,S) R Hollinshead 4-9-10 ... W Ryan 11
4 0407 FAYM 11 (CD) J Wharton 4-9-9 ..... J P Spencer (3) 5
5 4060 HARLESTONE LANE 13J D Burchell 3-9-8 ..... S Drowne 12
6 0000 ADRENALIN 51 T Clement 3-9-6 ..... A Polli (5) 4
7 0522 KOSEVO 7 (V,BF,D) D Shaw 4-9-4 ..... T Sprake 10
8 5010 BABY SPICE 30 (B,CD) R Johnson Houghton 3-9-4 A Culhane 9
9 3650 CLASSIC COLOURS 6J G Yardley 5-9-2 ..... V Slattery 3
10 2006 SHALYAH 4 (B) N Littmoden 3-9-0 ..... T G McLaughlin 2
11 2000 ITALIAN ROSE 11 A Carroll 3-8-13 ..... M Tebbutt 6
12 6600 WILL TO WIN 86 (C) T Keddy 4-8-12 ..... S Whitworth 1

3-1 Kosevo, 9-2 Time Of Night, 11-2 Faym, 6-1 Salty Behaviour, 7-1 C-Harry, 12-1 Harlestone Lane, Shalyah, 14-1 others.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Thunderer was in sparkling form yesterday, including the Musselburgh winners Swiftway (16-1) and Master Bavard (8-1) among his successes.

Folkestone

Going: chase good to soft, hurdles soft, heavy in places

12.30 (2m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, **Zafarelli** (J R Kavanagh, 33-1); 2, Stone Ridge (4-1); 3, Krabloonik (7-2). Calfish Keith (6th) 7-4 fav. 12 ran. NR Topanga. 1½l, 8l. J Jenkins. Tote £38.40; £6.70, £1.50, £1.90. DF £93.20. CSF £156.77. Tricast £563.41.

1.00 (2m 5f ch) 1, **Salmon Breeze** (M A Fitzgerald, 4-1); 2, Imad (9-2); 3, Storming Lady (7-2 fav). 13 ran. NR Christchurch, Fanfaron. Purple Ace. 6l, 15l. N Henderson. Tote £4.30; £1.60, £2.30, £2.60. DF £14.60. CSF £20.76.

1.30 (2m 6f 110yd hdle) 1, **Sorbiere** (J Goldstein, 5-1); 2, Sophie May (7-1); 3, Millmount (5-2 fav). 11 ran. NR Entebeal Nk, 10l. D Grissell. Tote £7.50; £1.40, £3.30, £1.80. DF £40.30. CSF £36.24. Tricast £102.24.

2.00 (3m 2f ch) 1, **Folly Road** (B Powell, 11-4); 2, Mountain Path (evens fav); 3, Secret Bid (9-2). 5 ran. 5l, dist. D Williams. Tote £4.20; £1.30, £1.60. DF £3.00. CSF £5.78.

2.30 (2m 6f 110yd hdle) 1, **Kingsmark** (R Dunwoody, 1-2 fav, **Thunderer's nap**); 2, Saleel (3-1); 3, Polyphony (40-1). 13 ran. 3½l, 18l. O Sherwood. Tote £1.50; £1.10, £1.50, £5.70. DF £1.50. CSF £2.01.

3.00 (2m ch) 1, **Cool Spot** (R Thornton, 4-1); 2, Mr Jervis (5-1); 3, First Instance (5-1). Northern Saddler (4th) 100-30 fav. 10 ran. 2½l, 15l. G Enright. Tote: £5.70; £2.40, £1.60, £1.80. DF £29.80. CSF £22.01. Tricast £92.11.

3.30 (2m 1½f flat) 1, **No Forecast** (D Gallagher, 5-4 fav); 2, Au Lac (9-1); 3, Brockton Glen (33-1). 12 ran. 3l, 3½l. S Sherwood. Tote £3.00; £1.10, £1.60, £3.40. DF £9.60. CSF £10.30.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £3,647.18 carried forward to Bangor today).

Placepot: £23.20 **Quadpot: £7.50**

Hereford

Going: good to soft, good in places

12.40 (3m 1f 110yd ch) 1, **Ask Antony** (J Tizzard, 1-3 fav); 2, Trouble Ahead (6-1); 3, Lough Lein Spirit (50-1). 9 ran. 17l, 16l. P Nicholls. Tote £1.20; £1.30, £1.40, £2.20. DF £3.60. CSF £2.62.

1.10 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, **Granby Bell** (A P McCoy, 7-2 fav); 2, Crazy Crusader (25-1); 3, Precious Island (25-1). 14 ran. NR Carol's Dream. 1½l, 8l. P Hayward. Tote £5.50; £2.20, £4.20, £7.10. DF £65.30. CSF £88.93. Tricast £1,779.59.

1.40 (2m ch) 1, **Native Fling** (A P McCoy, 7-2); 2, Hang'em Out To Dry (13-2); 3, Reach The Clouds (3-1 fav). 10 ran. 2½l, 12l. P Hobbs. Tote £6.80; £1.40, £3.10, £1.50. DF £17.10. CSF £25.10. Tricast £69.89.

2.10 (2m 3f ch) 1, **Ragamuff** (R Farrant, 6-1); 2, Jason's Boy (5-1); 3, Can't Say (25-1). Yankie Lord 7-4 fav. 10 ran. NR Wixoe Wonder. ½l, 10l. P Hobbs. Tote £13.00; £2.40, £1.20, £6.50. DF £10.80. CSF £37.62. Tricast £662.24.

2.40 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Tremendisto** (X Aizpuru, 25-1); 2, My Legal Eagle (3-1); 3, Dublin River (7-4 fav). 11 ran. NR True Vision. 2l, 3½l. T Wall. Tote £20.90; £3.50, £2.60, £1.20. DF £86.40. CSF £101.04.

3.10 (3m 1f 110yd ch) 1, **Saras Delight** (A Maguire, 13-8); 2, St Mellion Drive (11-10 fav); 3, Cherokee Boy (12-1). 8 ran. 2l, 14l. D Nicholson. Tote £2.60; £1.50, £1.10. £1.80. DF £1.80. CSF £3.62.

3.40 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Studio Thirty** (X Aizpuru, 3-1); 2, Rake Hey (5-4 fav); 3, Nahri (12-1). 5 ran. ½l, 5l. R Dickin. Tote £5.40; £3.10, £1.10. DF £2.80. CSF £7.02.

Placepot: £42.60 **Quadpot: £9.30**

Musselburgh

Going: good to firm, good in places

12.15 (2m 4f hdle) 1, **Swiftway** (M Foster, 16-1); 2, Farceur du Mesnil (15-8); 3, Rocheburg (7-4 fav). 13 ran. 1½l, 3½l. K Hogg. Tote £25.80; £9.30, £1.00, £1.20. DF £30.70. CSF £43.74.

12.45 (2m hdle) 1, **Camden Fellow** (Mr N Fehily, 12-1); 2, Welsh Mountain (7-2 fav); 3, Tabriz (9-1). 15 ran. 3l, ¾l. P Eccles. Tote £21.40; £4.80, £1.10, £3.70. DF £105.70. CSF £50.65. Tricast £380.43.

1.20 (3m ch) 1, **Young Tomo** (P Carberry, 6-4 fav); 2, I'm A Bargain (9-1); 3, Lagen Bridge (5-2). 10 ran. 3l, nk. J Howard Johnson. Tote £2.20; £1.60, £2.20, £1.40. DF £6.60. CSF £14.40.

1.50 (2m 4l hdle) 1, **Loveman** (A S Smith, 1-2 fav); 2, Oh So Cosy (14-1); 3, Golden Thunderbolt (9-2). 12 ran. 9l, 9l. K Morgan. Tote £1.60; £1.20, £2.50, £1.50. DF £8.20. CSF £8.91.

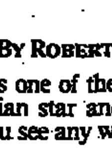
2.20 (2m 4l ch) 1, **Master Bavard** (Mr M Bradburne, 8-1); 2, Adamatic (100-30); 3, Pentlands Flyer (13-8 fav). 7 ran. Hd, 11l. P Monteith. Tote £9.00; £3.50, £1.70. DF £21.20. CSF £28.59.

2.50 (2m ch) 1, **Marble Man** (Mr J Crowley, 9-2); 2, Far East (33-1); 3, Falcon's Flame (14-1). Chummy's Saga 2-1 fav. 12 ran. 1½l, 19l. M Pelt. Tote £6.30; £2.30, £4.20, £4.50. DF £77.20. CSF £133.69. Tricast £1,753.32.

3.20 (3m hdle) 1, **Pontevedra** (A S Smith, 13-1); 2, Master of The Rock (10-1); 3, Hunting Slane (3-1). My Shenandoah (5th) 11-4 fav. 12 ran. 4l, 1¼l. K Morgan. Tote £29.90; £4.50, £2.30, £2.20. DF £75.80. Trifecta £501.40. CSF £115.12. Tricast £423.31.

Placepot: £60.40 **Quadpot: £22.00**

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SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This is one of the all-time great defences, brought off by the Brazilian star and former world champion Gabriel Chagas. Do you see any way of beating Four Spades after a club lead?

Dealer South — Love all — IMPs

North: ♠ K Q 5 4 ♡ A J 3 ◇ Q 4 ♣ K 10 7 5

West: ♠ 8 6 2 ♡ Q 5 ◇ 10 8 7 6 3 ♣ 9 4 2

East: ♠ 9 7 ♡ 10 9 8 6 2 ◇ K 9 5 2 ♣ A Q J

South: ♠ A J 10 3 ♡ K 8 7 4 ◇ A J ♣ 8 6 3

S	W	N	E
1 NT(12-14)	Pass	2 C	Pass
2 H	Pass	3 NT	Pass
4 S	All Pass		

Contract: Four Spades by South. Lead: two of clubs.

North's Two Clubs was asking for four-card majors, so when he went to Three No-Trumps over Two Hearts, South could see North must have four spades - that was the only explanation for his Two Club call.

West, Marcelo Branco, led the two of clubs. The Brazilians play "third and fifth" leads (In this popular alternative to traditional leads, you lead the third highest from a four-card suit and the fifth-highest from five.) so Chagas, East, could tell that both West and declarer had three clubs; hence declarer, with his marked 4-4 in the majors, had only two diamonds. It is still hard to see how declarer could go down in Four Spades, but Chagas concocted a fiendish swindle.

He won the jack of clubs, cashed the ace of clubs and switched to the nine of diamonds. As the club play apparently marked the queen with West, declarer thought he could hold his minor-suit losers to two by winning the ace of diamonds, drawing trumps and then finessing the ten of clubs. Ducking the diamond might allow West to win and give East a club ruff. That line of play wasn't consistent with West's lead – with Q942 of clubs he would have led the four on his methods. However, declarer put more weight on the initial club play – he had obviously not played enough against Chagas to realise the full extent of his cunning. Of course, when he finessed the club Chagas won and cashed the king of diamonds for one down.

You can see Chagas and Branco in action at the 1999 Macallan Tournament (see tomorrow's article for details or ring 0181-878 5844).

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

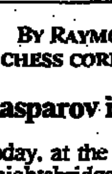
AGBA
a. A simplified alphabet
b. A spook
c. A West African tree

DENATANT
a. A descendant
b. Exogamous
c. Going with the current

FALE
a. A divining rod
b. A bog pixy
c. A thatched house

BRISE-BISE
a. A lace curtain
b. A breed of poodle
c. A pitfall

Answers on page 42



KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Kasparov in town

Today, at the Berkeley Hotel, Knightsbridge, Garry Kasparov, the world champion, takes on 125 players for charity. I continue with more games from his blitz match against his young rival, Vladimir Kramnik.

White: Garry Kasparov

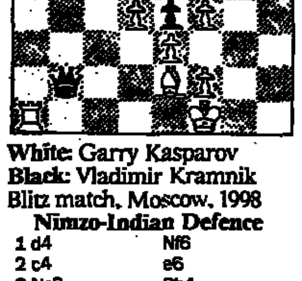
Black: Vladimir Kramnik

Blitz match, Moscow, 1998

Semi-Slav Defence

1 d4	d5
2 c4	c6
3 Nc3	Nf6
4 Nf3	e6
5 e3	Nbd7
6 Qc2	Bd6
7 Bd3	0-0
8 0-0	dxc4
9 Bxc4	b5
10 Bd3	Bb7
11 a3	a6
12 b4	a5
13 Rb1	axb4
14 axb4	Qe7
15 e4	e5
16 dxe5	Nxe5
17 Nxe5	Bxe5
18 Ne2	Qe6
19 f4	Bc7
20 e5	Ra2
21 Bb2	Nd5
22 Bxh7+	Kh8
23 Bf5	Bb6+
24 Kh1	Qh6
25 Be4	Ne3
26 Qb3	Nxf1
27 Rxf1	Ra7
28 Rf3	Bc8
29 f5	Qd2
30 Ng3	Bf2
31 Nf1	Qe1
32 Bd3	Rd7
33 e6	fxe6
34 fxe6	Rxf3
35 exd7	Bxd7
36 gxf3	Be6
37 Qc3	Black resigns

Diagram of final position



White: Garry Kasparov
Black: Vladimir Kramnik
Blitz match, Moscow, 1998

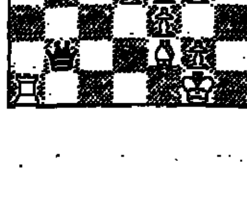
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4	Nf6
2 c4	e6
3 Nc3	Bb4
4 Qc2	d5
5 cxd5	Qxd5
6 Nf3	Qf5
7 Qxd5	exd5
8 a3	Bd6
9 Bg5	Nbd7
10 e3	c6
11 Bd3	h6
12 Bh4	g6
13 Nd2	Be7
14 f3	Nd5
15 Nxd5	Bxh4+
16 g3	Bxg3+
17 hxg3	cxd5
18 Rc1	Kd8
19 e4	fxe4
20 fxe4	dxe4
21 Nxe4	f5
22 Nd6	Ke7
23 Nb5	a6
24 Nc7	Rb8
25 Nd5+	Kd6
26 Nf4	g5
27 Ng6	Re8+
28 Kd2	Nf6
29 Rxh6	Ng4
30 Rh5	Rg8
31 Rxg5	Be6
32 Re1	Nh6
33 Nf4	Bd7
34 Rh5	Ng4
35 Bxf5	Nf6
36 Rh6	Rbf8
37 Bxd7	Kxd7
38 Ng6	Re8
39 Ne5+	Ke6
40 Ng4+	Kf5
41 Nxf6	Black resigns

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Nimzowitsch — Bernstein, Carlsbad, 1923. Can you work out the brilliant sequence by which White ensnared the black king with his rooks?



Solution on page 42

Rain stops play and any hope of different culture

SIMON BARNES



Midweek View

Two county cricketers get up in their horrible shared hotel bedroom and open the window. "Glorious weather today." "Marvellous weather. Think it'll keep up all day?" "Hope so." "Me too."

Of course, it is pouring with rain. A day off: glorious and marvellous thought. That is the culture in which Our Brave Boys in Australia have been brought up. They have been soaked in sulks, marinated in a misery, raised on resentment.

And so we come to this latest sporting disaster, this total abject failure in the Ashes, a performance bitterly deserving of the pitying contempt of Australia. In Oz, the only talking point is whether or not the Poms would have a chance against Australia's second XI.

If you watch much cricket, you will know that there are two infallible signs of a team that has given in to despair. The first is fielding, in particular catching. The dreaded "epidemic of dropped catches" does not mean that fielders lack ability or practice. It means that, in a deep sense, they have taken their eyes off the ball.

The second sign is the non-wagging tail. England constantly run up against bowlers who manage to make their highest Test score, but English bowlers cannot score a run between them. They have all bowled their hearts out: but once they come out to bat they have, in a corporate sense, chucked it in.

> 'Seven batsmen is a licence to fail'

There are certain tactics that never work in cricket, in all sport, and yet people never give up on them. As soon as England picked seven "batsmen", I knew they would lose humiliatingly. In theory, seven batsmen will make more runs than six — but theory and practice are different matters.

The seventh batsman takes the responsibility off the other six. It's all right if I fail, there are plenty more to come. The seventh batsman is, in fact, a licence to fail. It is a public confession of funk.

England have enough good batsmen, at least in theory, to do without a seventh. Alas, one of the best has not been picked. This is a Alec Stewart, specialist batter, as opposed to Alec Stewart, completely knackered all-rounder. The policy of Stewart doing absolutely everything, including captaincy, was always going to fail under extreme pressure.

Yet all these problems are not matters to do with individual selection, individual performance, individual error. These things are symptoms of a deep interior disorder — and it is not the sort of disorder on which a two-division county championship will work as a universal panacea.

It is not the cricket that is wrong, nor the cricketers. It's not even the game's leaders. It is the culture itself in which something has gone so badly wrong. Something is rotten in the state of English cricket. Let us call it The Culture of the Corporate Sulk.

I first witnessed this in the winter of 1985-86, after England had won an Ashes series in England. The cricketers lurked in their hotel in Trinidad with an armed guard in the corridor. The guard was there because of threatened local political action: such a thing had never been seen in English cricket, but morally, he had never gone off duty.

The Touring Sulk reached its peak in Zimbabwe last winter, when England toured this delightful and fascinating place by hiding in their hotel, getting bowled out by chicken farmers and boycotting the traditional party thrown by the press.

I think this moment encapsulated the three great symptoms of The Culture of the Corporate Sulk. The first, of course, is under-performance. The others can be summed up in the notion that abroad is absolutely bloody and pressmen are fiends.

England cricketers feel persecuted. That, in a way, is the nature of the game: any cricketer seeks to persecute opposing batsmen and bowlers — but English cricketing culture has developed this natural state into a deep-seated grudge against the entire world. Travelling supporters are despised, which says everything about the English cricketer's acceptance of his role as a public person.

The now traditional batting collapse we have seen from England this winter — five wickets in 16 balls was the latest — is merely the on-field extension of this sense of persecution and the lack of individual responsibility. In an awful way, an on-going collapse takes the blame away from personal failure. I failed; but then so did everybody else, right? Right. So that's all right then.

> 'I wonder how much Botham is to blame'

Cultures are created by people and I wonder how much Ian Botham contributed to the establishment of the Culture of the Corporate Sulk. At least Botham had the talent and attitude to play cricket in the face of the culture that he had helped to create — though not always, and certainly not against the West Indies.

All this has culminated in one of the worst performances by an England team in the history of the Ashes. There are now serious doubts as to whether this contest — once seen as the greatest challenge in sport — is still viable. People are surely entitled to throw up their hands and turn away from cricket, the much-hated pressmen among them.

But it's not my fault. Everybody else failed. I'm still in the team, aren't I? Bastard bloody journos simply don't understand. I think I'll go and play cards for six hours now and anyway, we could do all right in the last two Tests. After all, you never know your luck. It might rain.

Dismal England add weight to cries for change

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN ADELAIDE

WHILE Alec Stewart apologised to the English public for the latest failure of his team to mount an acceptable challenge for the Ashes, the worth and credibility of future Anglo-Australian series was being questioned here last night. They never thought it would come to this, but Australians are bored of winning.

Yet another batting collapse, its speed matched only by its predictability, brought the third Test match to an abrupt and appropriate end, 23 minutes after lunch on the final day. The two remaining Tests now hold limited relevance and only macabre appeal and there is a growing opinion in this country that the Ashes need no longer be dignified by more than a three-game series.

The increasing globalisation of cricket has already made it likely that Ashes series will be staged on a five-year cycle in each country, rather than four. Three-Test rubbers have become commonplace elsewhere — a trend that will spread with the advent of a world championship — and many Australians believe that England deserve nothing more.

It is increasingly difficult to argue, for this has become one of the most notorious mismatches in sport. The rapidity with which this series has imitated its five predecessors is shattering for those of us foolish enough to believe we might be about to see something more competitive.

Mark Taylor, the Australia captain, rose above the clamour to insult the English. "I'll probably be called a traditionalist, but I like Ashes series to be of five or six Tests," he said. "I'd be disappointed if it went to three."

However, Taylor gave a brutally frank assessment of the two teams. "There is still a substantial gulf between us. We're just a better cricket side. I've got to be honest. England can't be blamed for not being resilient or for not trying, they are just not as good as we are."

There was no crowing. Indeed, it seemed to be said more in sadness than in joy after his team had confirmed the retention of the Ashes for the sixth consecutive series — a run last achieved 30 years ago — and secured their nineteenth Test victory in a decade that has seen England win only four.

A sub-tropical storm in Brisbane is all that has prevented England being 3-0 down with two to play, but Stewart bridled at the suggestion that five Tests were no longer merited. "We could probably have said that about your guys a few years ago," he said.

Stewart was not hiding from the facts of his situation and accepted that the captain "must take the flak" in heavy defeat. It is an accountability that will not yet extend to threatening his position, for South Africa were beaten only four months ago, but the public mood for a change of direction and generations will inevitably jeopardise him, along with David Lloyd, the coach.

"We have to apologise to the people at home," Stewart said. "We didn't play well enough and we've been beaten pretty convincingly. We have worked very hard on the practice ground, but we haven't batted as we should and we have dropped catches."

Stewart rejected the theory that English cricket has declined. "I don't think we've got worse. I think other countries have accelerated past us." He also refused to accept that defeat could be blamed on mental frailty. "The side we picked has some pretty strong characters. I just think we have been outplayed."

Taylor compared his team with the formidable West Indies sides of the late Eighties. "Like them, we keep the pressure on opponents for long periods, just hanging in there until we get a wicket and then stepping up a gear. It's something we've learned to do well."

Winning the Ashes once more has altered nothing in Taylor's perception, for he had already achieved "everything I'd dreamed of as captain". He offered a hint, however, that he may now stand down after this series.

"I'll play the last two Tests then think about it," he said. "I would prefer to finish in this country and if I keep going I would have to go to the West Indies and Sri Lanka before our next home season."

Stewart would give a lot to be able to dictate his own future in such a way.



Stewart leaves the field disillusioned as Australia celebrate the moment of victory in the third Test yesterday. Photograph: Graham Chadwick/Allsport

Crawley and Hick fail test of nerve

ADELAIDE (final day of five): Australia beat England by 205 runs

FROM ALAN LEE

THE England selectors wasted many hours over a needless decision when they finalised the party for this ill-fated tour. They described in detail an agonising choice between John Crawley and Graeme Hick for the final batting position, yet it is now patently clear that neither man deserved to be included.

By the shallowness of their response to an emergency, both communal and personal, Crawley and Hick yesterday exposed their own paralyses and those that have infected this England team. Arguably, they have both abdicated the right to play again, though such are the limitations of this side that one, at least, must see out a series that has lost its sparkle before the planned festive finale.

It can be no surprise that England were beaten yesterday, for the result of this third Test was ordained in a gruesome hour of surrender on Sunday. Only the manner of defeat was left to be resolved and England contrived to subside in the fashion that Australians believe contemptuously to be an unbreakable habit.

In 23 minutes, either side of lunch, the last five England wickets were taken, four of them by Glenn McGrath. Alec Stewart, who had taken the brave and logical decision to drop himself down the order, discovered the dangers of batting too low in his team and was left unbeaten with 63.

The clatter is now so familiar that it can arouse nothing more than cynicism and, as Stewart was later to say, there is no point in blaming the tailenders if the proper batsmen have made insufficient runs. The dismissals of Crawley and Hick, however, were depressingly culpable.

They were out to successive balls, split by the lunch interval, and both strokes were temperamentally damning and technically bereft. The only difference was that Crawley had been in a little longer and had already flirted with various means of self-destruction. Remarkably, he even set off for a neurotic single when playing the third ball of the last over of the morning straight to cover. Stewart would have been out by yards if he had not refused the run.

McGrath's next ball was accurate and probing, but no more than that. Crawley, footwork minimal, edged it to second slip. It was one more tame dismissal in a sorry aggregate of 37 runs from four Test innings. These figures do not deceive, for Crawley, a dominant presence in county cricket last summer, has looked cowed and inhibited since this series began.

The same cannot quite be said of Hick. Thrust into the Perth Test after being summoned as a standby player, he was out second ball in the first innings but batted with refreshing purpose for 68 in the second. Adelaide, though, has seen him at his worst, out twice to strokes that were not only ill-conceived but ineptly executed.

He declined to walk after edging McGrath's full-length ball to third slip with a bat coming down late and crooked. Hick believed that he had jammed the ball into the ground, but the umpires conferred and made the correct decision. In two balls, England had turned 221 for five into 221 for seven and there was never the remotest likelihood that three tailenders who squabble over the No 11 position would delay Australia much longer.

Darren Gough's edge to Healy brought in Alan Mullally, who almost achieved a fifth consecutive nought by the stunning means of running himself out, first ball.

With that narrowly negotiated, Mullally collected four runs by top-edging a short one from McGrath over the slip cordon and was then out to the first ball he faced from Damien Fleming. Peter Such, who managed one ball in the first innings, this time survived three before registering the seventeenth nought by an England player in a series only three Tests old.

If McGrath picked up some cheap donations here, the most significant breach was made during the morning by the consistently underrated Fleming. A yorker, swinging in late and lethally to pluck out leg stump, was a forgivable end to another stoical innings from Mark Ramprakash, who had batted almost three hours for his third half-century in as many games.

MacGill finished wicketless and could yet come under pressure from Shane Warne for his place before the series is out. However, a likelier outcome is that both will play in the new year Test in Sydney, a prospect to which England can look forward only because it is the last of a series that has so far brought nothing but dismay.

■ ENGLAND boast the second-most powerful top order in international cricket, behind only Australia, according to the PricewaterhouseCoopers Ratings published after the third Test. Figures also confirm, however, that the country's tailend batsmen are the weakest of the nine Test-playing nations.

■ The ratings are calculated to place the emphasis on recent performances and account for the quality of the opposition and match conditions.

■ Although much has been made of the resilience of the Australia lower order, the rating of their bottom four batsmen, 395, ranks second-worst above only the 288 of England. South Africa, with 1,058, are strongest in this area.

MacLaurin stands by Ashes failures

LORD MacLAURIN of Knebworth, the chairman of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), said yesterday that "heads will not roll" as a result of the failure to regain the Ashes (Richard Hobson writes). Effectively, this amounts to a vote of confidence in David Lloyd, the England coach.

"It is a kneejerk reaction, when people are disappointed, to ask who is going to get sacked, but the answer is nobody," Lord MacLaurin said. "The people out there are doing their best and they need our support. It has become clear we are a long way behind Australia. Mentally, they are much tougher than us. I can see that by the way their last five can score 150 or 200 while we are blown away for about 25. That toughness will come about by playing competitive county cricket."

A two-division championship, incorporating promotion and relegation, comes into being in 2000, but the need to finish in the top nine next season to qualify for the top division should stimulate competition.

Lord MacLaurin also took encouragement from "the bigger picture", speaking of the successes of the England Under-19 side in winning the Youth World Cup last year, and the A team in Australia in 1996-97, as well as the work of Hugh Morris, the ECB technical director, at grass-roots level. "The problems cannot be solved in a few months," he added. "I hope the changes will have begun to have an effect by the time of the next Ashes series [in England in 2001]."

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	U	Conditions Piste	Runs to Resort	Off-p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Andorra								
Soldeu	25	40	Hard	Artificial	Varied	Sun	6	1/12
Austria								
Kitzbühel	15	67	Wet	Open	Varied	Fair	3	14/12
Obergurgl	45	160	Good	Open	Powder	Sun	-3	14/12
Söll	25	70	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	2	14/12
St Anton	30	310	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	0	14/12
Canada								
Lake Louise	80	108	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	-5	14/12
France								
Alpe d'Huez	32	140	Hard	Some	Varied	Fine	0	11/12
Chamonix	60	180	Good	Some	Packed	Sun	3	13/12
La Plagne	45	150	Good	Some	Varied	Sun	3	11/12
Les Arcs	27	140	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	2	12/12
Méribel	36	100	Hard	Some	Varied	Sun	0	13/12
Tignes	46	140	Good	Icy	Varied	Sun	-2	12/12
Val Thorens	50	120	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	-2	12/12
Val d'Isère	40	100	Good	Icy	Packed	Sun	-1	12/12
Italy								
Cervinia	10	130	Good	Open	Varied	Sun	4	12/12
Cortina	0	20	Hard	Closed	Varied	Cloud	-2	2/12
Mt di Campiglio	20	50	Hard	Open	Varied	Cloud	-3	10/12
Norway								
Geilo	20	30	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-4	10/12
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	8	120	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	2	13/12
Davos	20	125	Good	Closed	Varied	Fair	2	13/12
Grindelwald	30	80	Wet	Slushy	Heavy	Sun	4	12/12
Grindelwald	30	120	Hard	Closed	Varied	Fair	2	12/12
Klosters	10	50	Good	Closed	Varied	Fair	3	12/12
St Moritz	15	85	Fair	Closed	Heavy	Fair	2	12/12
Verbier	20	80	Wet	Closed	Varied	Fair	3	12/12
Villars	20	80	Fair	Open	Heavy	Sun	2	12/12
Wengen	60	60	Fair	Open	Heavy	Sun	2	12/12
Zermatt	15	90	Good	Some	Varied	Fair	2	12/12
United States								
Aspen	38	53	Good	Artificial	Varied	Fair	-6	7/12
Deer Valley	25	60	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	-7	8/12

http://www.skiclub.co.uk

L = lower slopes, U = upper slopes

FULL SCOREBOARD FROM ADELAIDE

Australia won toss

AUSTRALIA: First Innings

M J Slater c Stewart b Headley ....17 (52min, 37 balls, 1 four)

*M A Taylor c Hussain b Such ....59 (186min, 124 balls, 5 fours)

J L Langer not out ....179 (491min, 351 balls, 13 fours)

M E Waugh c and b Such ....7 (36min, 30 balls)

S R Waugh c Hick b Gough ....59 (148min, 109 balls, 1 six, 4 fours)

R T Ponting b Hick b Gough ....5 (33min, 28 balls)

†I A Healy c Ramprakash b Headley ....13 (29min, 27 balls, 1 four)

D W Fleming lbw b Headley ....12 (59min, 22 balls, 2 fours)

S C G MacGill b Such ....0 (5min, 4 balls)

C R Miller lbw b Headley ....11 (13min, 9 balls, 2 fours)

G D McGrath c Stewart b Gough ....10 (47min, 27 balls, 1 four)

Extras (lb 6, nb 13) 19

Total (125.5 overs) 391

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-28 (Taylor, 7), 2-140 (Langer, 54), 3-156 (Slater, 61), 4-264 (Langer, 107), 5-274 (Waugh, 113), 6-311 (Langer, 134), 7-338 (Waugh, 148), 8-339 (Langer, 149), 9-384 (Langer, 153)

BOWLING: Gough 29.5-4-103-3, Mullally 26-5-59-0, Headley 25-1-97-4, Such 38-8-99-3, Ramprakash 9-1-27-0

Second innings

*M A Taylor lbw b Such ....29 (88min, 71 balls, 3 fours)

M J Slater lbw b Gough ....103 (274min, 191 balls, 1 six, 9 fours)

J L Langer c sub (S C Hollioake) ....52 (227min, 163 balls, 2 fours)

M E Waugh not out ....51 (126min, 83 balls, 5 fours)

S R Waugh c Hick b Headley ....7 (21min, 22 balls)

R T Ponting b Gough ....10 (42min, 30 balls, 1 four)

†I A Healy not out ....7 (20min, 13 balls)

Extras (lb 12, w 1, nb 6) 19

Total (5 wkts dec, 98 overs) 278

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-54 (Slater, 17), 2-158 (Langer, 41), 3-216 (M E Waugh, 75), 4-230 (M E Waugh, 20), 5-268 (M E Waugh, 45)

BOWLING: Gough 22-2-76-2, Mullally 16-6-18-0, Headley 18-1-78-1, Such 29-5-66-2, Ramprakash 12-1-27-0, Hick 1-0-1-0

ENGLAND: First Innings

M A Butcher lbw b Miller ....6 (46min, 35 balls)

M A Atherton c Taylor b MacGill ....41 (108min, 92 balls, 2 fours)

N Hussain not out ....89 (262min, 204 balls, 6 fours)

*†A J Stewart c Slater b Miller ....0 (3min, 3 balls)

M R Ramprakash c M E Waugh b McGrath ....61 (134min, 120 balls, 2 sixes, 6 fours)

J P Crawley b McGrath ....5 (24min, 20 balls, 1 four)

G A Hick c Taylor b MacGill ....8 (17min, 16 balls, 2 fours)

D W Headley lbw b MacGill ....0 (2min, 1 ball)

D Gough c Healy b MacGill ....7 (9min, 5 balls, 1 four)

A D Mullally b Fleming ....0 (4min, 5 balls)

P M Such lbw b Fleming ....0 (1min, 1 ball)

Extras (b 1, lb 3, w 1, nb 5) 10

Total (82.5 overs) 227

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-18 (Atherton, 6), 2-83 (Hussain, 29), 3-84 (Hussain, 30), 4-197 (Hussain, 69), 5-135 (Hussain, 72), 6-210 (Hussain, 79), 7-210 (Hussain, 79), 8-226 (Hussain, 88), 9-227 (Hussain, 89)

BOWLING: McGrath 18-4-48-2, Fleming 10.5-2-34-2, Miller 23-6-71-2, MacGill 23-6-53-4, M E Waugh 3-0-17-0

Second Innings

M A Butcher c Healy b Fleming ....19 (49min, 39 balls)

M A Atherton c M E Waugh b Miller ....5 (56min, 43 balls)

N Hussain lbw b Miller ....41 (133min, 97 balls, 4 fours)

M R Ramprakash b Fleming ....57 (186min, 172 balls, 2 fours)

D W Headley c M E Waugh b Miller ....2 (3min, 4 balls)

*†A J Stewart not out ....63 (148min, 122 balls, 6 fours)



Taylor: jubilant victory

J P Crawley c M E Waugh b McGrath ....13 (66min, 53 balls, 1 four)

G A Hick c Ponting b McGrath ....0 (1min, 1 ball)

D Gough c Healy b McGrath ....3 (9min, 9 balls)

A D Mullally c Healy b Fleming ....4 (5min, 3 balls, 1 four)

P M Such lbw b McGrath ....0 (6min, 4 balls)

Extras (b 7, lb 9, nb 14) 30

Total (89 overs) 237

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-27 (Atherton 3), 2-31 (Hussain 2), 3-120 (Ramprakash 43), 4-122 (Ramprakash 43), 5-163 (Stewart 20), 6-221 (Stewart 56), 7-221 (Stewart 56), 8-231 (Stewart 61), 9-236 (Stewart 62)

BOWLING: McGrath 17-0-50-4 (nb 11; 2 fours, 6-0-12-0, 4-0-10-0, 3-0-9-0, 4-0-19-4); Fleming 21-3-56-3 (nb 3; 3 fours, 5-0-13-0, 3-0-12-1, 6-2-15-0, 4-0-10-1, 3-1-6-1); Miller 24-1-57-3 (4 fours, 8-1-21-1, 13-0-29-2, 3-0-7-0); MacGill 25-8-55-0 (5 fours, 4-0-8-0, 7-3-5-0, 6-2-14-0, 8-3-27-0); S R Waugh 2-1-3-0 (one spell).

SCORING NOTES: Fifth Day: Lunch: 221-6 (84.4 overs, 312min; Stewart 56). Second new ball taken at 12.49pm (211-5, 82 overs).

Match Award: J L Langer.

Umpires: S A Bucknor (West Indies) and S J Davis. **Third umpire:** P M Angley. **Match referee:** J R Reid (New Zealand).

SERIES DETAILS: First Test (Brisbane). Drawn. Second Test (Perth). Australia won by 7 wickets.

TESTS TO COME: Fourth Test (Melbourne) December 26-30. Fifth Test (Sydney) January 2-6.

☐ Compiled by Gil Frindall

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

FA Carling Premiership

Manchester Utd v Chelsea (8.0) .....

Scottish Premier League

Motherwell v Dundee (7.45) .....

Second division

Inverness CT v Alloa (7.45) .....

DR MARTENS LEAGUE CUP: Second round: Newport AFC v Weston-super-Mare; Racing Club Warwick v Sutton Coldfield Town; Solihull v Redditch; St Leonards v Crawley, Stourbridge v Gloucester

RYMAN LEAGUE: First division: Molesey v Worthing. **Second division:** Harlow v Abingdon Town.

THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Third round: Bolton Wanderers v Barnsley; Bury v Newcastle United; Crewe Alexandra v Brentford; Middlesbrough v Wolverhampton Wanderers; Oxford United v Wimbledon; Tottenham Hotspur v Walsall.

FOOTBALL LEAGUE YOUTH ALLIANCE: Midland Conference: Stoke City v Notts County (1.0).

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Barnet v Arsenal; Brighton v Millwall (7.0); Fulham v Charlton Athletic (7.0); Portsmouth v Swindon Town; Southampton v Wimbledon; Watford v Norwich City.

POINTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Aston Villa v Leicester City (7.0); Leeds United v Blackburn Rovers (7.0); Derby County v Everton (at Baseball Ground, 7.0). **First division:** Bolton Wanderers v Manchester City (at Rochdale FC, 7.0); Burnley v Tranmere Rovers (7.15); Port Vale v Coventry City (7.0); Middlesbrough v Oldham Athletic (7.0). **Second division:** Shrewsbury Town v York City (7.0); Stockport County v Newcastle United (at Hyde United FC, 7.0); Rotherham United v Wrexham (2.0). **Third division:** Carlisle United v Halifax Town (2.0); Chester City v Scunthorpe United (2.0); Chesterfield v Walsall (2.0); Darlington v Hull City (2.0); Hartlepool United v Rochdale (2.0).

FA CARLSBERG VASE: Third round: Bedlington Terriers v Micklefield Sports, Bowers v Diss.

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: First division: Consett v Shildon.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: Premier division: Canterbury v Cray

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bridport v Taunton.

CALOR COUNTY ANTRIM SHIELD: Quarter-finals: Cliftonville v Ards; Dungannon Swifts v Distillery; Glenavon v Ballymena, Larne v Linfield.

MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Toddington v St Margaretsbury.

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Clachnacuddin v Cove (8.0); Forres Mechanics v Keith, Rothes v Peterhead

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division cup: Second round: Ettingshall v Tipton Town; Lawson Mardon Star v Kinglon Town, Stafford T v Wolverhampton C.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE CUP: Second round, second leg: Cowes Sports v Downton; Moneyfields v Bemerton Heath Harlequins.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: East Preston v Selsey

OTHER SPORT

SNOOKER: Irish Open.

FOOTBALL

Blue is the colour for Wilkins in title clash

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

WHATEVER the outcome of the FA Carling Premiership match between Manchester United and Chelsea this evening, whatever the result of the heaviest of heavyweight fixtures, the 55,000 fans at Old Trafford are likely to have witnessed the next Premiership champions. Supporters of Aston Villa, Leeds United and Arsenal might as well concede defeat right now.

It is no idle boast from Alex Ferguson, the United manager, or casual aside from Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-manager, but the considered verdict of Ray Wilkins, the respected radio and television pundit. As a former midfield player with United and Chelsea, Wilkins is well-qualified to pass judgment on his successors in the red and the blue.

"I'm going for Chelsea to win the game, it's a gut feeling," he said yesterday. "They are also very capable of winning the league. I've said before that anyone capable of finishing above United will win it and Chelsea have a major chance. It's the best Chelsea team I've seen for a long time.

"United, though, are very strong. They can score goals from everywhere and although they are still involved in the Champions' League, I'm sure they have a big enough squad to cope with that. In my opinion, these are the two teams who will fight it out for the title. They are the main two."

A win for United will take them back to the top of the Premiership, a position that they held for 24 hours over the weekend, on goal difference from Villa; a win for Chelsea will not only extend their unbeaten league sequence to 16 matches but also elevate them above United into second place.

Ferguson was furious when United gave away an injury-time goal in the 2-2 draw against Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday and, afterwards, refused to shake hands with George Graham, the Tottenham manager. He had calmed down by yesterday and was able to give a more dispassionate, if not particularly revealing, analysis of what lay ahead.

"There's a good chance for us to go top and it's going to be a terrific match," Ferguson said. "Chelsea have been in very good form this season and have got a consistency about them; which maybe Chelsea teams have lacked in the past."

Dwight Yorke will return up front for United after missing the game against Tottenham with a thigh strain. Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is likely to stand down, despite scoring both United's goals at White Hart Lane, while Denis Irwin and Paul Scholes are also available again.

Chelsea are not so fortunate, with Frank Leboeuf, the France central defender, missing out because of suspension. Marcel Desailly, his compatriot, is also expected to be absent because of injury.

However, history is on their side. They have lost on only two of their past 23 trips to Old Trafford. "It's a vital game for us because we all know what United are capable of," Celestine Babayaro, the Chelsea wing back, said. "Hopefully, we'll go out there and show everyone that Chelsea are a team to be scared of as well."

Gerard Houllier, the Liverpool manager, has invited Olexandre Holovko, the Dynamo Kiev defender, and Rigobert Song, the Cameroon World Cup player, to train with the club and is also trying to sign Tomasz Lapinksi, the Poland centre back.

Houllier is also interested in signing Thomas Helmer, Bayern Munich's experienced Germany international defender, who would not need a work permit because he comes from a European Union country.



Gillespie sees his future at Blackburn Rovers after Kidd was installed as manager at Ewood Park a fortnight ago. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Rover Gillespie rejoins his mentor

BY GEORGE CAULKIN

KEITH GILLESPIE became Brian Kidd's first signing as manager of Blackburn Rovers last night, the Northern Ireland winger leaving Newcastle United for a knock-down fee of £2.35 million and rejoining the man who played such a fundamental role in his early career.

"The chance to team up with Brian again was too good to resist," he said. Kidd was heavily involved in Gillespie's development in the Manchester United youth team before the winger, now 23, moved to Tyneside in January, 1995 as the makeweight in the £7 million transfer of Andy Cole to Old Trafford. Kidd, at present negotiating with Motherwell in a bid to sign Brian McClair as his assistant at Ewood Park, has wasted little time in renewing the relationship.

There were further signs of activity last night, when it emerged that Kidd was discussing terms with Matt Jansen, the Crystal Palace striker. Jansen, 21, who has scored seven league goals this season, was omitted from the side that face Sunderland in the Nationwide League first division at the Stadium of Light yesterday.

Gillespie's move brings to a close a deeply unsettling period in his life. Rarely far from the front pages during his time at Newcastle, he almost joined Middlesbrough last August, only for the proposed £3.5 million deal to break down when the player failed a medical on the ankle injury that had kept him out of Newcastle's FA Cup-losing side.

The fallout from that episode eventually saw Kenny Dalglish, then the Newcastle manager, lose his job. A local newspaper ran a story — apparently with the backing of a club director — suggesting that Gillespie may never be capable of playing again. Dalglish reacted furiously. Kidd's reaction to tying Gillespie to a 4½-year contract was very different.

"I don't have to justify this signing, because Keith is pure quality," he said. "He is one of a dying breed and I believe his best years are ahead of him. It means we will be well blessed in attacking areas." On Gillespie's past problems with injuries, he insisted: "We are thoroughly happy with the medical side of things."

The departure of Gillespie, who could have left St James' Park on freedom of contract next summer, will strengthen Ruud Gullit's hand in the transfer market as well as crystallising his interest in Ibrahim Ba, 25, the France winger who is unsettled at AC Milan.

Freddy Shepherd, the Newcastle chairman, opened negotiations with the Serie A club last Friday for a player rated in the £4 million bracket and who makes no secret of his desire to play in England. Shepherd is also believed to be in discussions with Paris Saint-Germain concerning Didier Domi, their left back.

Gillespie admitted to mixed feelings at heading back to Lancashire.

"It was a wrench to leave Newcastle. I enjoyed my years there, but Brian had a big influence on my decision because I rate him very highly as a coach. Blackburn are a club with a lot of ambition and, although I only found out about it yesterday, it didn't take me long to make my mind up," he said.

McClair, the former Manchester United and Celtic forward, could be installed as the assistant to Kidd by the weekend. Officials at Ewood Park confirmed yesterday that they have opened negotiations with McClair, who is the player-coach of Motherwell, the Scottish Premier League side.

McClair spent 11 years at Old Trafford before leaving this summer and he is expected to seize the chance to link up with Kidd once more. Kidd, who was assistant to Alex Ferguson, the United manager, before he left to join Blackburn a fortnight ago, relieved Derek Fazackerley of his first-team duties last week, paving the way for McClair to make the journey south.

However, Motherwell will only allow McClair to leave Fir Park if they are offered sufficient compensation by the FA Carling Premiership club.

As a senior player at United, McClair became the team's representative to the Professional Footballers' Association and built a good understanding with Kidd, but he moved to Motherwell to gain coaching experience.

Tony Thomas, the Everton defender, is on the verge of joining Motherwell for £150,000. The deal was put on hold a fortnight ago, but Walter Smith, the Everton manager, yesterday described Thomas's move as "imminent".

Niall Quinn hopes to see out his professional career at the highest level after signing a 3½-year contract extension that will keep him at Sunderland, the favourites for promotion from the Nationwide League first division, until 2002. The Ireland striker, 32, described his move as "my last challenge at club level".

OLYMPIC GAMES

Member of IOC claimed theft

BY JOHN GOODBODY

A MEMBER of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) suggested that he should be reimbursed £12,000 after having money "stolen" from his hotel room when visiting Manchester, a candidate city for both the 1996 and 2000 Games, it was alleged yesterday as the "cash-for-votes" scandal in the Olympic movement intensified.

Graham Stringer, a leading figure in Manchester's two bids and who is now MP for Manchester Blackley, said: "When we said we would get the police [to investigate the theft], he did not seem keen.

"Most of the negotiations were conducted with me and things became fairly fraught. The tune of the conversation was that the money should be replaced."

Stringer, who was leader of Manchester City Council at the time, also said that a different IOC member had "double-claimed" his air fare. "We had paid his air fare in cash, but he had also had the ticket paid by the IOC itself. There was a long rigmarole and eventually we got our money back."

Stringer said that Manchester had been scrupulous in following guidelines on gifts, which were limited to a maximum value of $200 (about £120) from each bidding city to each IOC member. "There is a line and you should not cross it," he said. "The reason the IOC works is because it is independent. However, it is under an obligation to prove that it is completely clean."

In the voting in 1993 for the 2000 Games, Manchester finished third, behind Sydney, the winners, and Beijing.

The "cash-for-votes" scandal began when Marc Hodler, 80, a Swiss member of the IOC executive board, alleged last Friday that there had been systematic bribery and other malpractices in choosing the sites of the Games, including Atlanta, Nagano, Sydney and Salt Lake City.

Two days later, Frank Joklik, the president of the Salt Lake City Organising Committee (SLOOC), apologised and accepted full responsibility for a controversial scholarship scheme run by the group, which won the bid for the 2002 Winter Games. This programme provided nearly $400,000 (about £300,000) in tuition and other assistance to 13 individuals, including six relatives of IOC members, mainly from Africa.

Yesterday, senior members of Melbourne's unsuccessful bid for 1996 Games said that payments of between $3,000 and $6,000 were made to individual IOC members, although they denied that they were in exchange for votes. The IOC has set up an inquiry that will investigate these claims.

Dick Pound, a vice-president, said: "What we are concerned with is whether there has been inappropriate conduct by some of our members or agents involved in the bid process."

Claims that African votes were up for sale have been denounced by Sam Ramsamy, the IOC member in South Africa. He said: "The targets of these claims always seem to be Africans."

Sampdoria beckons Platt

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

DAVID PLATT would become the youngest manager in Serie A, the top division in Italian football, if he decides to take over the reins at troubled Sampdoria this week. The signs are that Platt, 32, the former England captain, will do just that, taking the job ahead of some of Europe's leading coaches.

Four former Sampdoria players — Graeme Souness, Trevor Francis, Ruud Gullit and Gianluca Vialli — have been linked with the post, as has Roy Hodgson, the former Blackburn Rovers manager, who was previously in charge of Internazionale in Milan. However, it appears that Platt's friendship with Emiliano Salvarezza, the Genoa club's managing director, is likely to be the deciding factor in who is handed the task of guiding Sampdoria away from relegation trouble near the foot of Serie A.

A 5-2 defeat at Lazio on Sunday saw them slide to fourteenth place in the 18-team Serie A, just one place off the relegation zone. The defeat also marked the end for manager Luciano Spalletti, who was dismissed.

Platt made a favourable impression in Italy playing for Sampdoria, Juventus and Bari, but he retired in the summer after helping Arsenal to the FA Carling Premiership and FA Cup double. He has made no secret of his desire to try his hand at club management and *ANSA*, the Italian agency, reported that he will finalise details of his contract with Sampdoria later this week.

Platt has travelled the world since his retirement, picking up experience about coaching in different countries, and has helped out Howard Wilkinson at the Football Association with England's youth and schoolboy teams.

Ray Wilkins, another England international, who enjoyed a successful playing career in Italy and has had managerial roles at Queens Park Rangers and Fulham, said that Platt could not afford to turn down the chance to take charge of one of Italy's biggest clubs. "If he's looking to go into management and if they want him, I couldn't think of a better place to start," Wilkins said.

League to consider wage cap

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

IN AN effort to head off the impending financial crisis facing many Nationwide League clubs, the Football League is to investigate the possibility of wage-capping. Initially, it will focus its attention on clubs in the third division, who are deemed to be most at risk.

Six clubs — Oxford United, Chester City, Mansfield Town, Scarborough, Portsmouth and Swindon Town — have had to seek financial help from the Professional Footballers' Association this season and the League is keen to eradicate what appears to be the first signs of an epidemic. Barry Hearn, a member of the League's board of directors, has been selected as the trouble-shooter.

"Salary-capping is a serious proposition and perhaps could be brought in as early as next season," Richard Scudamore, the League's chief executive, said yesterday. "Barry will be looking into the financial stability of the clubs and will be reporting back.

"In the past, all we have had to go on is desk-top data — what we can glean from the club's annual returns. Now, and over the next three months, we will have the chance to get some real data."

Hearn, the Leyton Orient chairman, will delve into all aspects of the running of the third division clubs. However, the first and second division clubs will not be involved in his investigations. "There is no way we want to inhibit competitiveness," Scudamore said. "That is why we would not dream of touching the first division clubs at the moment. It would be unthinkable for us to consider wage-capping them because of what might happen if they won promotion into the Premiership. It would then become impossible for them to compete at the higher level.

"We are not talking about a maximum wage, either. We would be talking about a wage level as a proportion of the total revenue of the club. Clubs feel there is a relentless pressure on them to overstretch themselves and we have to do something about it."

As a joint venture with the Football Association, the League has also appointed an insolvency solicitor to study the finances of its clubs. "Some of what we have found so far is not particularly pretty," Scudamore said.

□ Bournemouth, who were on the brink of bankruptcy two years ago, have revealed a trading profit of more than £200,000. The second division club made a profit of £221,216 last year before transfer fees were included — and they showed a profit of £500,000. Much of the surplus was generated by Bournemouth's run to the final of the Auto Windscreens Shield at Wembley last season, where they were defeated by Grimsby Town.

FOR THE RECORD

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NFL): San Francisco 35 Detroit 13

American Conference

Eastern division

	W	L	T	F	A
NY Jets	10	4	0	368	246
Buffalo	9	5	0	345	283
Miami	9	5	0	273	206
New England	8	6	0	303	277
Indianapolis	3	11	0	268	390
Central division					
Jacksonville	10	4	0	361	285
Tennessee	8	6	0	292	285
Pittsburgh	7	7	0	236	257
Baltimore	5	9	0	247	301
Cincinnati	2	12	0	243	393
Western division					
• Denver	13	1	0	452	257
Seattle	7	7	0	324	259
Oakland	7	7	0	247	315
Kansas City	6	8	0	289	311
San Diego	5	9	0	218	309
National Conference					
Eastern division					
Dallas	8	6	0	345	259
Arizona	7	7	0	290	348
NY Giants	6	8	0	238	282
Washington	5	8	0	292	332
Philadelphia	3	11	0	142	311
Central division					
* Minnesota	13	1	0	480	270
Green Bay	9	5	0	362	284
Tampa Bay	7	7	0	263	275
Detroit	5	9	0	276	335
Chicago	3	11	0	239	349
Western division					
† Atlanta	12	2	0	380	256
† San Francisco	11	3	0	420	285
New Orleans	6	8	0	255	295
St Louis	4	10	0	253	320
Carolina	2	12	0	289	381

• conference title

*division title

† qualified for play-offs

CRICKET

WELLINGTON: (final day of four): Wellington 317 and 124; India 268 and 175-2 (S Ganguly not out 79, R Dravid 68 not out) India won by eight wickets.

FOOTBALL

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Leeds United 2 Coventry City 0

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Southern division: Chelmsford 6 Brackley 1.

RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Purfleet 4 Harrow 0.

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Luton 0 Colchester 2; Gillingham 0 Reading 1.

PONTIN'S LEAGUE: First division: Barnsley 0 Sheffield Wednesday 0.

FA UMBRO TROPHY: Second-round replay: Rothwell 1 Hendon 2.

THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Third round: Norwich 0 Blackburn 3; Port Vale 1 Notts County 1; Preston 4 Peterborough 2.

FA VASE: Fourth-round draw: Sudbury Wanderers v Garforth Town; Clitheroe v St Helens Town; Bedlington Terriers or Micklegover Sports v Banstead Athletic; Sudbury Town v Spalding Utd or Northwood, Wick v Wendell Gill; Warrington Town v Thame Utd; Cambeley Town v Chipstead or Tooting and Mitcham; Goole v Bemerton Heath Harlequins Harlow Town v Taunton Town; Ash Utd v Taverton Town, Bedford Utd v Wroxham; Ford Utd v Kidsgrove Athletic; Lymington and New Milton v Mossley; St Blazey v Dunston, Federation Brewery Bowers Utd or Diss Town v Woodbridge Town, Bedlingtade or Oldbury Utd v Workington or Tow Law Town.

□ Ties to be played Saturday, January 9.

AUTO WINDSCREENS SHIELD: Second-round draw: Northern section: Halifax Town v York City; Rochdale v Stoke City; Notts County or Hull City v Wrexham; Scunthorpe Utd v Carlisle Utd, Hartlepool Utd v Preston NE; Darlington v Chesterfield; Lincoln City v Mansfield Town; Wigan Athletic v Scarborough.

BRAZILIAN LEAGUE: Final: First leg: Cruzeiro 2 Corinthians 2.

ARGENTINE LEAGUE: Belgrano 0 Rosario Central 0; Independiente 1 Huracan 1; Colon 1 River Plate 1; Newell's Old Boys 4 Talleres 2; Gimnasia 4 Ferro Carril Oeste 3; Boca Juniors 3 Union 1; Velez Sarsfield 2 Argentino Juniors 5; Platense 3 Estudiantes de La Plata 2; Racing Club 3 San Lorenzo 2; Gimansia Esgrima de La Plata 1 Lanus 0.

PORTUGUESE LEAGUE: Academica Coimbra 0 FC Porto 2; Desportivo Chaves 0 Benfica 4.

GOLF

MEN'S WORLD RANKINGS: 1, T Woods (US) 12.30pts average; 2, M O'Meara (US) 10.43; 3, D Duval (US) 9.67; 4, D Love III (US) 9.43; 5, E Els (SA) 9.18; 6, N Price (Zimb) 8.86; 7, C Montgomerie (GB) 8.51; 8, L Westwood (GB) 8.35; 9, V Singh (Fiji) 8.51; 10, P Mickelson (US) 7.76, 11, F Couples (US) 7.65, 12, J Furyk (US) 7.23, 13, J Ozaki (Japan) 6.77; 14, J Parnevik (Swe) 6.47; 15, J Leonard (US) 6.42; 16, S Elkington (Aus) 6.18; 17, D Clarke (GB) 5.72; 18, G Norman (Aus) 5.65; 19, B Watts (US) 5.23, 20, S Hoch (US) 5.22. Other leading Great Britain and Ireland players: 37, I Woosnam 3.44; 57, N Faldo 2.79; 68, A Cotton 2.36, 87, S Torrance 1.89; 97, P Baker 1.79; 106, P Harrington 1.62; 109, R Claydon 1.58, 110, P Price 1.56; 120, D Carter 1.42; 132, M James 1.31; 140, D Gilford 1.25, 147, P McGinley 1.20; 157, G Orr 1.13; 159, R Russell 1.13, 159, G Brand jnr 1.13, 162, D Howell 1.12, 167, P Broadhurst 1.11; 169, P Mitchell 1.10; 172, S Webster 1.09, 182, J Spence 0.98

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Montreal 2 Phoenix 2; New York Rangers 5 Calgary 2; Colorado 0 St Louis 0.

RUGBY LEAGUE

TEAMSPORT INTERNATIONAL: Scotland Students 12 France Students 24.

SKIING

SESTRIERE, Italy: World Cup slalom: 1, F C Jagge (Nor) 1min 51.92secs; 2, T Stangassinger (Austria) 1:51.98; 3, J Kosir (Slovenia) 1:52.10; 4, P Bourgeat (Fr) 1:52.88, 5, K A Aamodt (Nor) 1:53.43; 6, C Mayer (Austria) 1:53.56, 7, G Rocca (It) 1:53.76, 8, L Kjus (Nor) 1:53.78; 9, T Stensen (Nor) 1:53.79, 10, D Grubelnik (Slovenia) 1:53.91, 11, H C Strand-Nilsen (Nor) 1:53.96; 12, S Amiez (Fr) 1:53.97, 13, K Page (Fr) 1:54.05; 14, M Hansson (Swe) 1:54.10; 15, M Eberle (Ger) 1:54.13; 16, F Tescari (It) 1:54.74 (55.73-59.01); 17, R Schoenfelder (Austria) 1:54.77; 18, R Gravier (Fr) 1:54.82; 19, M Vrhovnik (Slovenia) 1:54.92; 20, A Ertl (Ger) 1:54.98. Leading positions: 1, S Eberharter (Austria), 368pts. 2, Meyer 342. 3, Kjus 313, 4, H Meier (Austria) 280; 5, Aamodt 279; 6, Stangassinger 216

SNOOKER

DUBLIN: Irish Open: First round: J Machie (Eng) bt R O'Sullivan (Eng) 5-4, J Parrott (Eng) bt D Dale (Wales) 5-4 M Couch (Eng) bt A Robidoux (Can) 5-1, A McManus (Scot) bt D Harold (Eng) 5-4, B Sraddon (Scot) bt A Hamilton (Eng) 5-4, S Hendry (Scot) bt J. Perry (Eng) 5-1, M Williams (Wales) bt L Walker (Wales) 5-3, P Hunter (Eng) bt S Daws (Eng) 5-4; A Drago (Malta) bt K Broughton (Eng) 5-4; G Dott (Scot) bt M King (Eng) 5-4.

SPORT IN BRIEF

■ **RUGBY UNION:** Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the former Lord Chancellor, is expected to be appointed chairman of the independent review panel set up to consider the structure and governance of Scottish rugby. The review process was discussed at a meeting of the Scottish Rugby Union executive board on Monday evening, the first since the resignations of Duncan Paterson, its chairman, and Charlie Bisset, its vice-chairman.

■ **SNOOKER: Ronnie O'Sullivan, voluntarily absent from competition since mid-October, was beaten 5-4 by Jimmy Michie, the world No 81, in the first round of the Irish Open on his return yesterday. O'Sullivan displayed only brief glimpses of his talent and at 4-4, was forced to suspend play to have a new cue-tip affixed after the original had worked loose.**

■ **ATHLETICS:** Colin Jackson will use the BUPA Indoor Grand Prix on February 14 as preparation for the world indoor championships on March 5. "I am going to run in Birmingham and then fly to Australia the next day to prepare for the world indoor championships in Japan," Jackson said. Jackson joins Haile Gebrselassie, who will be attempting to break the world indoor 5,000 metres record, at the National Indoor Arena.

■ **BOXING: Robert McCracken, of Birmingham, is heading for a summer contest with Hassine Cherifi, of France, the World Boxing Ccouncil middleweight champion. McCracken, who has been named as the mandatory challenger for the title, said: "Purse bids will be sought in May and then I will get my chance in the summer. If Cherifi wants to make a voluntary defence in the meantime, then I will meet the winner of that fight." McCracken, who has boxed out of Las Vegas since relaunching his career in the United States, has put together a run of 32 wins.**

■ **AMERICAN FOOTBALL:** Garrison Hearst ran for 198 yards and a touchdown as the San Francisco 49ers beat Detroit 35-13 to sustain their hopes of a National Football League divisional title. Hearst set a single-game rushing record for the 49ers, who had already clinched a wild-card play-off berth.



Public servant who became the authentic voice of the FA

Graham Kelly was never quite accepted by the masses, **Russell Kempson** says



Kelly faces the media after Hillsborough, above, assesses the Cantona affair, below left, and at the 1994 World Cup





Graham Kelly was the public face of the Football Association, an often shadowy and labyrinthine organisation that attempts to control football, both the amateur and professional games, in England. Whenever matters of great importance occurred, Kelly would be called from his apparently endless rounds of meetings to put forward the establishment line. He had an unenviable task.

Not surprisingly, but perhaps unfairly, the bouffant-haired, rotund figure was frequently made fun of. His monotone delivery and almost squeaky tone never endeared him to the masses; he was seen as a buffoonish character, who, despite his high office, was not to be taken seriously.

According to one observer, his voice could "tranquillise a polecat". Rarely, though, did he rise to the bait. The job, to him, was a serious business.

"I ensure that the policies or the decisions of the FA council are implemented," he said. "I explain to and liaise with other football bodies and act as the executive arm of the FA."

As always, he was reticent to discuss his part in the policy-making of the FA. "It's difficult to put a percentage on it, but, certainly, I'm the instrument of the policy-makers. I like to think I help to shape the policies."

Yet Kelly, a snappy dresser, did care about what the public thought, about how he was perceived in the stadiums around the country. "I've got to care about my public image," he said. "I would like people to listen to what I'm saying rather than taking the easy route and thinking: 'He looks a miserable bugger, what does he know about it?'

"I spend a lot of time smiling and laughing and enjoying myself immensely, but it doesn't come over. It's my biggest failing. It leads to misapprehension, but I'm not sure what I can do about that."

Kelly, 49, attended more than 100 matches a year, working behind the scenes in a role with which he was more comfortable. He would frequently be seen watching games at the smallest and most unlikely of non-league venues. He was a closet man of the people, he wanted to be liked, but he could never carry off the persona.

In his ten years at Lancaster Gate, the most difficult job that Kelly faced was the aftermath of Hillsborough in 1989. When the footballing community, especially that of Merseyside, was having to come to terms with the death of 95 supporters, Kelly had to steel himself for the inevitable political backlash.

He had been present at the match, had also experienced the trauma of witnessing such horrors, yet he had to retain a cool, dispassionate view, without rushing to conclusions and without trampling over the emotions of the bereaved. It was not easy.

"The events at Hillsborough can never be forgotten by those of us who were there," he later recalled. "They are memories of the worst day of my life. They are still painful for me, but my feelings are nothing compared to the daily grief that must remain for families who lost loved ones.

"I've asked questions of myself since then. It's only natural for anyone who was there. We hope and believe the enormous changes made to stadiums since then will prevent such a dreadful event happening again."

'He was more comfortable working behind the scenes'

Kelly grew up in an abandoned spa hotel in Blackpool, the only child of a tram driver and a receptionist. His maternal grandfather and his uncle had run the place, the "Cleveleys Hydro", in the 1930s with his mother's help, but, after the end of the Second World War, only the public bar was reopened.

He passed his 11-plus and loved sport, especially football and cricket. As a 14-year-old goalkeeper, he played for Accrington Stanley, then of the old third division. "I signed for them as an illegal schoolboy," he said. He went on to play for the Blackpool third team and it was a passion that continued even after he became FA chief executive.

He would play for the England Press XI, playing alongside the people who were so often his greatest critics, yet he would rarely be able to finish the matches. Official business usually demanded his presence.

"Another setback for the English Press," he wrote in his diary of the European championship finals in England in 1996. "I departed at half-time to attend the pre-match lunch at the National Liberal Club. Before I've showered, the lads have conceded three more and eventually lose 6-2! Total football! More like total something else!"

Kelly was once voted by readers of *When Saturday Comes*, the supporters' magazine, as the man "who has done most damage to English football". He not only turned up to collect the award, dressed in black tie, but made an Oscar-style acceptance speech. By the time he had finished, he had convinced those present that he, too, was a fan.

TELEVISION CHOICE

Leonardo's story so far

Leonardo DiCaprio
Channel 5, 8.00pm

So much has been written about the Hollywood heart-throb in the wake of *Titanic* that the makers of this profile must have been pushed to find anything new. But his fans will not mind that, while newcomers to the DiCaprio phenomenon can ponder why of half a dozen good-looking young actors he should have been singled out for star treatment. DiCaprio may not thank the programme for digging out an interview he gave at the age of 17 during which he introduced us to his mother and showed us round his bedroom. The occasion was his first big part, opposite Robert De Niro in *This Boy's Life*. Since then it has been uphill all the way including a decent stab at Romeo. The 14-year-old girl who won a competition to find DiCaprio's number one British fan tries to explain his appeal and David Soul offers him advice on how to cope with the burdens of fame.

Catherine Cookson's Colour Blind
ITV, 9.00pm

The key to Catherine Cookson's stories is to take a heartrending human predicament, colour it with melodrama, soften it with sentimentality and let the audience know that however bleak things seem there will be a silver lining. So it is with this latest adaptation, set in South Shields (where else?) in 1915, though the pivotal family happens to be Irish. Niamh Cusack plays the daughter Bridget, who marries James (Tony Armatrading), a merchant seaman. He is handsome and dignified but he is also black, the cue for an outburst of racist abuse led by Bridget's own brother. Melodrama takes over as James gets involved in a fight and storms off, leaving Bridget to bring up their child. Two further episodes take the story into the 1930s, by which time little Rose Angela is a woman and suffering prejudice in turn.

Johnny Meets Madonna
Channel 4, 9.00pm

He is Johnny Vaughan, star of breakfast television, and she needs no embellishment. Conducted in a London hotel, it is an unusual interview in that most of the questions were gathered in the street and are relayed directly from members of the public. So what do they want to know? Anything from Madonna's favourite dessert, to whether she would like more children (yes) and is it true that she has a tattoo on her bottom (no). On her country's topic, she admires Hillary Clinton, does not know Monica Lewinsky and is not prepared to judge her and is against the President being impeached. She declines to rule out a rumoured move to London, partly because she has such a high opinion of Londoners. "Even stupid people here," she declares, "are smarter than Americans."



Johnny Vaughan relays the public's questions to Madonna (Channel 4, 9pm)

Best of British: Lenny Henry
BBC1, 10.35pm

Lenny Henry has probably done as much as anybody to make black performers acceptable on mainstream television and he is also a very funny man. Such, inevitably, are the twin themes of this profile. Ironically, in view of how his career has developed since, he made one of his earliest appearances on *The Black and White Minstrel Show*, where all the other "black" men were white men with made-up faces. It seems a long time ago. The black comedian Geoff Schumann says: "The important thing was having someone on television who looked similar to you and who was on prime time, not two o'clock in the morning." The MP Diane Abbott and the writer Mike Phillips talk about Henry as a role model for the black community.

Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

Selling Ted
Radio 4, 11.00am

Whatever you think of Sir Edward Heath, there is not much argument that the older he gets the more tetchily entertaining he becomes, thus making him a lot more interesting now than he ever was when he was Prime Minister. This programme, about the frantic round of plugging activity that preceded the publication of his autobiography, has plenty of the two Teds with whom we are most familiar: chuckling Ted and grumpy Ted. Various politicians chip in with their perspective on Sir Edward's contribution but the overwhelming impression is that this most English of men, with his organ-playing and his home in the shadow of Salisbury Cathedral, is nonetheless more revered in Brussels than he is ever likely to be in Britain.

Route 66 Revisited
Radio 2, 10.00pm

Second part of the series on the old route from Chicago to Los Angeles has Nick Barraclough dropping by several famous landmarks as he leaves Chicago and heads into Missouri and beyond. Two of the landmarks are the massive Gateway to the West Tower in St Louis and Andy Williams. Andy Williams? Yes, the sweatered singer of sleepy ballads lives in the spectacular Ozark Mountains, to which he retreated in order to have a more satisfying and unpolluted lifestyle than that available in the smog of Los Angeles. St Louis is of course the birthplace of Chuck Berry, one of the first people to record the song that gives the series its title and, indeed, is often wrongly credited with writing the song.

Peter Barnard

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo's Office Party 12.00 Kevin Greening. Includes 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Chris Moyles 5.45 Newsbeat 6.00 Dave Pearce 8.00 The Evening Session 10.00 Movie Update 10.10 John Peel 12.00 Gilles Peterson 2.00am Emma B 4.00 Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 12.00 Jimmy Young 2.00pm Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 Nick Barraclough 8.00 Mike Harding 9.00 The Andy Peebles Soul Show (4/13); 10.00 Rivers 68 Revisited. Sea Choice (2/7) 10.30 Richard Allinson 11.45 Following My Star's 12.00 Karina Lesiejnich 3.00am No Duds

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire 9.00 Nicky Campbell 12.00 The Midday News with Allan Robb 1.00pm Ruscoe and Co 4.00 Drive with Peter Allen and Jane Garvey 7.00 News Extra with David McNeil 7.30 John Inverdale's Football Night. Premiership action as Manchester United take on Chelsea. Plus, the National Lottery Draw 10.00 Littlejohn 11.00 Late Night Live with Nick Robinson 1.00am Up All Night

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans 9.30 Russ Williams 1.00pm Nick Abbot 4.00 Hamst Scott 6.45 Mark Forrest 10.00 Janey Lee Grace 1.00am James Merritt 4.30 Jeremy Clark

TALK RADIO

6.00am Bill Overton & Clare Catford 9.00 Scott Chisholm 12.00 Lorraine Kelly 2.00pm Anna Raeburn 4.00 Peter Deeley 5.00 The Sports Zone 8.00 James Whale 1.00am Ian Collins

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am This World Today 7.00 News 7.15 Off the Shelf: PlayBack. 7.30 Meridian Live 8.00 News 8.10 Pause for Thought 8.15 Westway 8.30 Everywoman 9.00 News; (948 only) News in German 9.05 World Business Report 9.15 The Farming World 9.30 Britain Now 9.45 Sports Round-Up 10.00 Newsdesk 10.30 One Planet 11.00 Newsdesk 11.30 Sports International 12.00 News 12.05am World Business Report 12.15 Britain Today 12.30 Global Wildlife 12.45 Sports Round-Up 1.00 Newshour 2.00 News 2.05 Outlook 2.30 Megamix 3.00 News; (648 only) News in German 3.05 Sports Round-Up 3.15 Performance 3.30 Everywoman 4.00 News 4.15 From Our Own Correspondent 4.30 Insight; (648 only) News in German 4.45 Britain Today 5.00 Europe Today 5.30 World Business Report 5.45 Sports Round-Up 6.00 Newsdesk 6.30 The Works; (648 only) News in German 7.00 News Summary 7.01 Outlook 7.25 Pause For Thought 7.30 Multitrack: X-Press 8.00 Newshour 9.00 News 9.05 World Business Report 9.15 Britain Today 9.30 On Screen 10.00 Newsdesk 10.30 Insight 10.45 Sports Round-Up 11.00 News 11.05 Outlook 11.30 Multitrack: X-Press 12.00 Newsdesk 12.30am From Our Own Correspondent 12.45 Britain Today 1.00 Newsdesk 1.30 Omnibus 2.00 Newsday 2.30 Meridian Books 3.00 News 3.05 World Business Report 3.15 Sports Round-Up 3.30 Brain of Britain 4.00 The World Today

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast 8.00 Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour, and favourite pieces voted for in the Classic FM Top 300 12.00 Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones aplns listeners' favourites 2.00pm Concerto. Mozart (Violin Concerto No 5 in A major) 3.00 Jamie Crick, including Afternoon Romance and Continuous Classics 6.30 Newsnight 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven 9.00 Evening Concert. Brahms (Variations on a theme of Haydn); Franchomme (Variations on a Russian Theme and a Scottish Theme); Mozart (La ci Darem la Mano. Chopin (Variations on 'La ci Darem la Mano); Max Reger (Variations and Fugue on a theme by Mozart); Reinstein (Variations on the Lambeth Walk) 11.00 Mann at Night 2.00am Concerto (r) 3.00 Mark Griffiths

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air with Petroc Trelawny. Includes a review of Noel Coward's *Present Laughter* at the West Yorkshire Playhouse starring Ian McKellen
9.00 **Masterworks** with Peter Hobday. Handel (Concerto a due cori No 2 in F); Schumann (Symphonic Studies); Mahler (Des knaben Wunderhorn, Nos 8-15); Satie (Parade)
10.30 **Artist of the Week: David Wilkcocks**
11.00 **Sound Stories Castles and Palaces — The Alhambra** with Donald Macleod
12.00 **Composer of the Week: Bach**
1.00pm **The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert** Nelson Goerner, piano (r)
2.00 **The BBC Orchestras** BBC Philharmonic under Yan Pascal Tortelier, Peter Donohoe, piano
4.00 **Choral Evensong** Live from Chelmsford Cathedral. Master of the music Graham Elliott
5.00 **In Tune** Sean Rafferty talks to the trumpeter Crispian Steele-Perkins
7.30 **Performance on 3** Chris Wines introduces a concert from St George's, Brandon Hill, Bristol. Elizabeth Wallfisch and Catherine Mackintosh, violins, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Christophe Coin, cello. Scarlatti (Concerto No 3 in F in Seven Parts); Pergolesi (Violin Concerto in B flat); Vivaldi (Cello Concerto in B minor) 8.15 Book of the Month 8.35 Leonardo Leo (Cello Concerto in F minor); Vivaldi (Concerto in D minor for two violins and cello, Op 3 No 11); Durante (Concerto No 8 in A, La Pazzia)
9.35 **Postscript: Reading Around — The Poems of Friedrich Holderlin** (3/5)
10.00 **Ensemble** Penny Gore introduces a recital by the Fibonacci Sequence, including characteristic works by three French composers
10.45 **Night Waves** Laura Cumming discusses *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* by the historians Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelan
11.30 **Jazz Notes** Alyn Shipton talks to the *Times* jazz critic Clive Davis and the Latin American jazz expert Pablo Aguirre about Cuban jazz
12.00 **Composer of the Week: Elliott Carter** (r)
1.00am **Through the Night** with Donald Macleod. 1.00 Bohemian Organs 1.55 J.E. Bach (Meine Seele erhebt den Herrn) 2.10 Shostakovich (Symphony No 5) 3.00 Clara Schumann (Piano Trio in G minor, Op 17) 3.25 Robert Schumann (Cello Concerto in A minor) 4.30 Escher (Trio for clarinet, viola and piano) 5.05 Stamitz (Clarinet Concerto No 10 in B flat) 5.45 Prokofiev (Sarcasms)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today Presented by Anna Hill
6.00 Today With John Humphrys and James Naughtie
8.35 (LW) Yesterday in Parliament
9.00 Midweek with the *Times* columnist Libby Purves
9.45 (LW) Daily Service
9.45 (FM) Serial: Dear Bill (3/5)
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray and guests
11.00 Selling Ted See Choice
11.30 **The Bona History of Julian and Sandy** Maureen Lipman presents a documentary about the camp double act from Barry Took and Marty Feldman's popular radio series *Round the Horne*
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News 12.04pm You and Yours Trixie Rawlinson and Mark Whittaker present consumer news and investigations
1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Wildbrain Lionel Kelleway chairs the fifth heat of the wildlife quiz, from Scotland
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Clive Stephanie Norgate's drama, starring Priyanga Elan, Siobhan Stamp and Ben Crowe
3.00 **Gardeners' Question Time** Nigel Colborn, Bob Flowerdew and Anne Swithinbank answer horticultural questions. Chaired by Eric Robson (r)
3.30 **Stafford on Humour** Profiling the life and career of Paul Jennings, the madrigal singer and writer of mock scholarly treatises (2/4)
3.45 **With Great Pleasure** Cicely Berry presents her favourite pieces of writing, with Maureen Beattie and Antony Sher
4.00 **Case Notes** Graham Easton investigates commonly used drugs (r)
4.30 **Thinking Allowed** Laura Taylor encourages his guests to challenge popular convention
5.00 PM with Chris Lowe and Charlie Lee-Potter
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 **Booked** Helen Lederer, Roger McGough, David Stafford and Miles Kington take part in the light-hearted literary panel game
7.00 **The Archers** 7.15 **Front Row** Francine Stock takes a look at the phenomenon of the Christmas annual.
7.45 **Under One Roof** by Jenny Landreth (r)
8.00 **Education 2000** Edward Stourton invites a panel and guests to discuss the proposition that education should be valued for its own sake, rather than as the supplier of the future workforce
8.45 **Keyword** Matt Frei focuses on a foreign word which seems to sum up its country of provenance, beginning with the word *tangente* — broadly meaning commonplace bribery — and its sinister and sometimes surreal significance for the Italians. The Spaghetti Incident (1/4) (r)
9.00 **Costing the Earth** The power of the environmental lobby has enforced a worldwide ban on DDT. Yet the pesticide has proved most effective against malaria, which kills three million people every year, mainly in the developing world
9.30 Midweek (r)
10.00 The World Tonight with Robin Lustig
10.45 **Book at Bedtime: Spiderweb** Stephanie Cole reads part eight of Penelope Lively's tale
11.00 **Late Night on 4: Children's Hour** with Armstrong and Miller Offbeat comedy sketches, written by and starring Ben Miller and Alexander Armstrong
11.30 (LW) Today in Parliament Round-up of developments in both Houses
11.30 (FM) **4 at the Store** Stand-up comedy from the Comedy Store. Hosted by Simon Bligh (r)
12.00 News 12.30am **The Late Book: Aphrodite** Isabel Allende's history of the orgy (3/5)
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.
Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 39

AGBA

(c) A West African tree, Gossweilerodendron balsamiferum. The Yoruba name.

"The desk for Unilevers, designed by Charles Kenrick, in agba, with a black bean top and reeded hardboard case."

DENATANT

(c) Of fishes, swimming with the current. From the Latin "swimming down". "Denatation" means the movement of fishes in the direction of the current.

"A consideration of our herring shoals from the standpoint of denatation."

FALE

(c) A house of the type built by the Samoans. "No grass hur here, but a luxurious six-bed holiday home. This is the first of ten fales — Samoan houses — being built on Fraser Island, off the Queensland coast. The fale is fitted with hot and cold water, etc."

BRISE-BISE

(a) A curtain of net or lace for the lower part of a window. In French it means "wind-breaker". "The brise-bise lace curtain (familiarly called a brisby)."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1. Kg2! (threatening 2. Rh1+) 1. . . . Nf6; 2. Rh1+ Nh5: 3. Bxh5 gxh5: 4. Rha!! and 5. Ra6- will force mate.

CALIFORNIA ZINFANDEL

The ideal accompaniment to turkey.



CALIFORNIA ZINFANDEL

SUTTER HOME

Stuff the turkey.



SUTTER HOME CALIFORNIA WINES.
They don't need food to make sense.

Safari, but not, so far, so good for Sophie

REVIEW



Joe Joseph

Sophie Williams has lived in Hampstead all her life. She loves London: she says she needs *ER* on a Wednesday night. Before moving to Kenya she probably thought zebras were horses who were too lazy to take their pyjamas off. But when her husband Guy — who was born in Kenya and has always yearned to fall asleep once again to the sound of hippos — is asked to set up a safari park in Kenya, and when he and Sophie and their 18-month-old son Rufus grab this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and move to a tent amid swaying trees and inquisitive wildlife, Sophie looks about her and realises that the jungle isn't as bad as she thought. It's worse. It's like a zoo in which the keepers have stupidly forgotten to erect any fences to protect visitors.

Watching *Safari Strife*, Edward Hall's film for **Cutting Edge** (Channel 4), felt like overhearing a couple of diners arguing their way towards divorce at the next table. You felt uneasy watching as cracks spread across the Williamses' marriage like the warnings of an impending earthquake. But it was impossible not to watch: you wanted to know if they managed to find a compromise, but you also wanted to know how such cheese ever married such chalk in the first place.

Had it not become clear that, behind the savage sniping, Sophie and Guy also love each other, the film might have been unbearable to watch at all. Even when Sophie eventually decides to return to London with Rufus, she is still not certain that life without Guy will not be even grimmer than staying in hell with him. It was a portrait of a marriage, as painted by Munch in his *Scream* period.

Nairobi's tourism officials should overlook Sophie when hiring someone to write their next "Come to Kenya" brochure. "It's like Mars with an atmosphere: a typhoid basin." Finally, in tears of frustration: "I'm not the same person I was before I came here. ... There's continual anger. Sometimes I suppress it; sometimes I'm depressed with it. It's horrible."

You see Sophie's point. When Rufus gets a stomach bug, the hospital is a day's travelling away. When Guy is visiting Mombasa, their home is attacked by Somali guerrillas. Sophie and Rufus survive by hiding in the bushes all night. But you also sympathise with Guy as he struggles to persuade his homesick wife that they've made the right decision. "I absolutely love it," says Guy. "My expectations, obviously, were that it was going to appeal to Sophie as much as it did to me. Certainly that hasn't materialised" (hasn't materialised? Guy has a career awaiting him as a *Yes, Minister* mandarin). So who is making the bigger sacrifice? Who should?

Considering that this is Edward Hall's first dabble with a film camera, this taut emotional balance might be down to luck. More probably it's down to Hall's experience as a theatre director and to his ear for telling a story through dialogue, without allowing the audience the smug satisfaction of going into the First Act interval thinking they know how it will all turn out. We still don't know. A final caption tells us that Guy and Sophie now try to maintain their marriage by visiting each other regularly.

Back to the Floor (BBC2), which also champions better harmony through regular contact, ended its excellent run last night by seeing how Grant Whitaker, the new "Home Moving Director" of the removals firm Pickfords, coped with life as a furniture remover. It was rather disappointing to discover that not everything in Pickfords' head office is embalmed in white paper. You assume that movers can't kick the habit of embalming everything in white paper. You expected to see bosses arriving at work to find their secretaries had been swaddled in white paper and marked "This Side Up". Maybe the reason head office wasn't like this was that nobody in head office had much of a clue about what moving furniture involved. To his credit, Whitaker realised quickly how carelessly his staff were being treated and acted. Why does it need television to cattle-prod British business like this?

Later on BBC2, **Modern Times** attempted a version of *Back to the Floor* with Emma Hewitt's film about a new kerb-crawling school in Leeds: men caught kerb-crawling go back to school for a day to "re-educate" them about the gruesome, dangerous industry they are helping to keep alive — though Julie Bindel, one of the school's architects, would prefer it if the men were just shot (what an inventive way to speed up the justice system! Must memo Jack Straw). The men are told the blame for prostitution is *entirely* theirs, because "if there wasn't a demand, there wouldn't be a supply" (so does that make drug-sellers blameless?). Anna, a Leeds prostitute who is tiring of the game, is warmly and rightly embraced by Bindel and her team: but so, curiously, is Anna's boyfriend, Colin, even though he's happily living off her earnings. Colin would be willing to be the bread-winner instead of Anna — but only as an "escort": other jobs don't pay enough to interest him. So would that voluntary career choice make Colin a victim, too? Or just greedy? These questions were never asked. kerb-crawlers should stay at home and fiddle with their Milk Tray.

Decoding the sexual metaphor of a box of chocolates in **Wrappers** (BBC2), Virginia Valentine, a communications expert, explained that "the box itself clothed the chocolates. So when you took the lid off you were undressing the chocolates. And the chocolates themselves were in their frilly little brown and gold undies inside the box. So you lifted off the lid and you unclothed the box to get to the sweet, round female form beneath." Crikey!

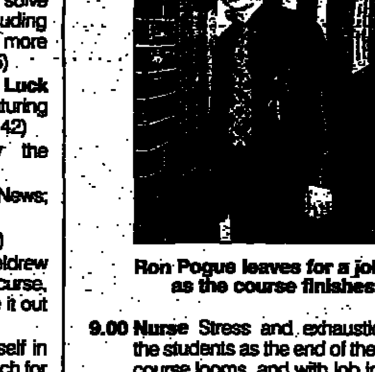
BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (46871)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (96245)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (5388500)
9.40 Style Challenge (1044852)
10.05 City Hospital (T) (7990429)
10.55 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (4552500)
11.00 Good Living with Jane Asher (4642177)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (4645264)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (1487413)
12.00 Pass the Buck (9249974)
12.25pm Going for a Song (9155581)
12.50 The Weather Show (T) (73093603)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (99332)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (45307177)
1.40 Neighbours Lou receives a tempting offer (T) (97306264)
2.05 Ironside The Chief visits Mexico to negotiate a hostage scientist's release. With Raymond Burr (r) (8355072)
2.55 Battersea Dogs' Home The home enjoys an activity day (4527210)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (9016581) **3.45** Bananaman (6263210) **3.50** ChuckleVision (3483806) **4.10** Get Your Own Back (6243111) **4.35** The Queen's Nose (9752061) **5.00** Newsround (2223239) **5.10** Blue Peter (8939055)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (805516)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (535)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (887)
7.00 A Question of Sport The footballer Neil Ruddock, the cricketer Phil Tufnell, the jockey Tony McCoy and the athlete John Regis join forces with the regular team captains Ally McCoist and John Parrott. Chaired by Sue Barker (T) (8451)
7.30 Tomorrow's World Craig Doyle gives Santa a new winter wardrobe, featuring a hat and underwear made from a super-charged material which conducts electricity to generate heat (T) (871)
8.00 The Life of Birds David Attenborough examines the tactics birds use to solve the problems of parenthood, including dippers, which feed their young more than 100 times per day (T) (613055)
8.50 The National Lottery: Amazing Luck Stories The midweek draw, featuring tales of incredible fortune (T) (376142)
9.00 Party Political Broadcast By the Labour Party (T) (233697)
9.05 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (995245)
9.34 National Lottery Update (851142)
9.35 One Foot in the Grave The Meldrew household falls foul of an evil curse, prompting Victor to attempt to drive it out (r) (T) (315245)
10.05 War and Piste Natasha finds herself in hot water and Scott and Fraser search for an alternative profession (T) (120784)
10.35 CHOICE **Best of British: Lenny Henry** Profile of the outlandish comedian (4/4) (T) (256326)
11.20 Breach of Conduct (1994) FILM A woman has an affair with her military official husband's boss, who later kidnaps her. Starring Peter Coyote and Courteney Thorne-Smith. Directed by Tim Matheson (T) (436245)
12.45am Weather (3468366)
12.50 BBC News 24 (20952543)

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BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: King Greenfingers (6276429) **7.05** Teletubbies (5197871) **7.30** Yogi's Treasure Hunt (8192351) **7.55** To Me, To You (1115245) **8.20** Funky Phantom (4010719) **8.45** Juniper Jungle (3226581) **8.55** Tales of the Tooth Fairies (8975968) **9.00** King Greenfingers (4570429) **9.05** The Phil Silvers Show (7979697) **9.30** Great Romances of the 20th Century (45448) **10.00** Teletubbies (86326) **10.30** FILM: To Be or Not To Be (84605559) **12.05pm** The Roadshow Collection (9246887) **12.30** Working Lunch (49264) **1.00** Juniper Jungle (21745622)
1.10 The Arts and Crafts Hour (7881528)
2.10 Match of the Day Greats Newcastle United v Brighton in 1984 (86291332)
2.40 News; Weather (T) (6021413)
2.45 Westminster with Diana Madill Prime Minister's Question Time (T) (3825055)
3.55 News; Weather (T) (9039697)
4.00 Change That (r) (T) (9112974)
4.25 Ready, Steady, Cook (T) (9115061)
4.55 Esther (r) (T) (1840535)
5.25 Today's the Day (T) (8925852)
5.50 Lifeline Queen Elizabeth Foundation for Disabled People (T) (178697)
6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation Part two. Picard and Data locate Ambassador Spock (r) (T) (147061)
6.45 Sliders A blind seer tells Quinn he will die in a sacrifice and the Sliders track Rickman down (T) (364581)
7.30 Proud to be Chinese Changing Chinese identities (T) (413)
8.00 Looking Good Highlights of London Fashion Week (r) (T) (7871)
8.30 Home Front Anne McKevitt creates a kitchen diner (T) (9806)



Ron Pogue leaves for a job interview as the course finishes (9pm)

9.00 Nurse Stress and exhaustion overtake the students as the end of their three-year course looms, and with job interviews on the horizon, some can barely handle the strain. Last in series (T) (752239)
9.50 Naked The culmination of the ageing process, featuring Michael, an 85-year-old who speaks to himself in the mirror saying how revolting he looks. Last in series (T) (308448)
10.30 Party Political Broadcast By the Labour Party. With subtitles (643413)
10.35 Newsnight (T) (254968)
11.20 Brothers and Sisters Pastor Gittens is rushed to hospital (635005)
11.55 Weather (662448)
12.00am Despatch Box (5039036)
12.35 BBC Learning Zone: Arts Late: English Only in America? **1.00** Yes, We Never Say "No" **1.30** Was Anybody There? **2.00** Belief Season **4.00** Languages: Deutsch Plus 2 **5.00** Business and Training: Professional Update 2 **5.45** Open University: What You Never Knew About Sex **6.10** Sexual Selection and Speciation **6.35** Lessons from Kerala

HTV

5.30am ITN Morning News (56790)
6.00 GMTV (1229061)
9.25 Trisha (T) (2887852)
10.15 This Morning (T) (991516)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (3539239)
12.30 ITN Lunchtime News (T) (36790)
1.00 Shortland Street (8603351)
1.35 Home and Away Tragedy strikes at the Diner (T) (97301719)
2.00 Christmas Home in the Country Ideas for the festive season (8/9) (5181142)
2.45 Supermarket Sweep (T) (233036)
3.15 ITN News Headlines (T) (8947806)
3.20 HTV News (T) (8944719)
3.25 CITV: Wizadora (8854142) **3.35** The Slow Norris (3018351) **3.45** The Animal Shelf (3005887) **4.00** Rupert (9036500) **4.25** The Rottentrolls (1304061) **4.40** Mad for It (1848177)
5.10 WEST: Wildlife Rescue (6/6) (6812806)
5.10 WALES: Primetime Diary (T) (6812806)
5.40 ITN Early Evening News (T) (704448)
5.59 HTV Crimestoppers (173142)
6.00 Home and Away (r) (T) (526790)
6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight; Weather (T) (222871)
6.25 WEST: HTV Weather (151055)
6.30 The West Tonight (T) (555)
7.00 Emmerdale Kathy grows closer to Chris (T) (8177)
7.30 Coronation Street Martin and Les come to blows (T) (239)
8.00 Find a Fortune Carol Vorderman hosts a live, interactive show which aims to inform lucky viewers of windfalls they didn't even know they'd had. Including the National Lottery result (9581)



Tony Armatrading and Niamh Cusack star (9pm)

9.00 CHOICE **Colour Blind** New three-part melodrama based on Catherine Cookson's novel (1/3) (T) (2245)
10.00 Party Political Broadcast By the Labour Party (357516)
10.05 News at Ten; Weather (T) (115852)
10.35 HTV News and Weather (T) (466806)
10.45 Clive James on TV (283429)
11.15 WEST: The Secret KGB UFO Files New evidence of UFOs (743413)
11.15 WALES: HTV News '98 (986036)
12.15am WALES: Tales from the Darkside Another spooky drama (5021017)
12.50 Child in the Night (TVM 1990) FILM A child psychologist tries to help police by recovering the buried memories of a boy who witnessed his father's murder. Drama, starring JoBeth Williams. Directed by Mike Robe (629611)
2.35 Hopeful Traveller David Bean completes his Cumbrian walk (5670562)
3.05 Trisha Shown earlier (r) (T) (9979727)
3.55 Cybernet (58006017)
4.20 Box Office America Top 10 US movie releases (18706678)
4.50 ITV Nightscreen (68733348)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (44938)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News; Weather (6901603)
1.00 Echo Point (11500)
1.30 Christmas Home in the Country (8395603)
2.15-2.45 Home and Away (883595)
3.20-3.25 Central News (8944719)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (6812806)
6.25-7.00 Central News; Weather (222871)
10.35-10.45 Central News; Weather (466806)
11.15 Tales from the Crypt (100142)
11.45-12.50 Phil Collins Live in Paris (595622)
3.45am Cybernet (99553307)
4.10 Central Jobfinder '98 (2309659)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (2180611)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
12.15-12.27pm Westcountry News; Weather (3539239)
12.27-12.30 Christmas Stories (6919622)
1.00 Emmerdale (11500)
1.30 Christmas Home in the Country (7178326)
2.10-2.45 Home and Away (5478622)
3.20-3.25 Westcountry News; Weather (8944719)
5.08 Birthday People (8342326)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (6812806)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (48581)
10.35-10.45 Westcountry News; Weather (466806)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** Weather (3539239) **5.10-5.40 Home and Away;** (T) **6.00 Meridian Tonight** (T) (603) **6.30-7.00 Holiday Park** (5/5) (555) **10.35-10.45 Meridian News;** Weather (T) (466806) **11.15 Meridian Business Awards** (T) (986036) **12.15am-12.50 Taped Up** (2/2) (r) (5021017) **5.00-5.30 Freescreen** (T) (44938)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.19pm Anglia Air Watch** (6817210) **12.20-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (6901603) **1.00-1.35 Dinosaurs** (r) (8603351) **5.10-5.40 Shortland Street; 6.23 Anglia Weather** (152784) **6.25-7.00 Anglia News** (T) (222871) **10.34 Anglia Air Watch** (647239) **10.35-10.45 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (466806) **11.15-12.50 FILM: The Comedy of Terrors** (743413)

S4C

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (r) (43978448) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (46224887) **9.00 The Cosby Show** (r) (T) (59418054) **9.35 FILM: The Revolt of Mamie Stover** (96824239) **11.15 Capriccio** (40025158) **11.30 Powerhouse** (T) (49921719) **12.00pm Judge Joe Brown** (46510448) **12.30 Sesame Street** (74652185) **1.00 Planed Plant** (46227974) **1.00 Rala Rwdins** (r) (T) (66056245) **1.15 Lisabeth** (T) (66971500) **1.30 The Fly** (83508871) **1.35 FILM: Big Deal At Dodge City** (T) (45597142) **3.20 Collectors' Lot** (T) (49461535) **3.50 Fifteen-to-One: Final** (T) (84782516) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (11470790) **5.00 Planed Plant** (16903326) **5.00 Rownd a Rownd** (35643245) **5.15 Ffeil** (38399351) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (11398142) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (19062806) **6.10 Heno** (T) (80792061) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (33456535) **7.25 Ffermio;** (T) Newyddion (30428577) **8.00 Talwrn y Beirdd** (16992210) **8.30 Newyddion** (T) (16084245) **9.00 Johnny Meets Madonna** (T) (21864429) **10.00 Brookside** (T) (95759500) **10.35 Storm Force** (4/5) (T) (34241061) **11.35 Frasier** (r) (T) (75993239) **12.05am Under the Moon** (46427611) **4.30 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.55am Sesame Street (9240429)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (16055)
9.00 The Cosby Show (r) (T) (9597784)
9.35 The Revolt of Mamie Stover (1956) FILM Melodrama, with Jane Russell. Directed by Raoul Walsh (T) (94325993)
11.15 Capriccio (3576719)
11.30 Powerhouse (T) (5061)
12.00 Sesame Street (15719)
12.30pm Bewitched (T) (34332)
1.00 Judge Joe Brown A woman sues her ex (19142)
1.30 Roots to Success Cottage garden plants (T) (45218239)
1.45 Violent Saturday (1955) FILM A gang of crooks moves into a small town, intending to rob the local bank. Melodrama, starring Richard Egan and Victor Mature. Directed by Richard Fleischer (T) (87056622)
3.20 Collectors' Lot Debbie Thrower meets a bubble bath collector and Lorne Spicer visits the oldest member of the Thomas the Tank Engine Fan Club (T) (8855577)
3.50 Fifteen-to-One: Final (T) (9573784)
4.30 Countdown (T) (9673500)
4.55 Ricki Lake Teens whose mothers are partying too much (T) (7909055)
5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow Update on last week's story of the horse whisperer (T) (332)
6.00 Late Lunch with Mel and Sue Eddie Izzard and Ron Atkinson join the fun with Sue Perkins and Mel Giedroyc (42351)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (981887)
7.50 Artranspennine Project for the River Medlock, by Ian Rawlinson, Nick Crowe and Graham Parker (T) (144790)
8.00 Brookside Ron is shocked by Anthea (T) (9239)
8.30 The Real Holiday Show Rashid goes in search of his roots on a backpacking trip to Pakistan, and Catherine Lamb takes her family to Butlin's (5/8) (T) (4974)
9.00 CHOICE **Johnny Meets Madonna** Johnny Vaughan interviews the pop icon who discusses turning 40, trading fame for love and her proposed move to London (T) (3577)
10.00 Rising Damp Rigsby shoots to kill. Classic comedy with Leonard Rossiter (r) (T) (16448)

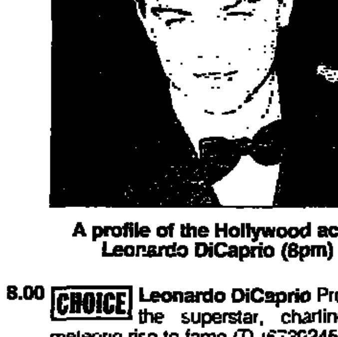


Bob and Margaret's babysitting services are called upon (10.30pm)

10.30 Bob and Margaret The couple babysit for Bob's brother while he is away in India (T) (29968)
11.00 Whose Line Is It Anyway? Improvised comedy filmed in Hollywood. Hosted by Clive Anderson. With Colin Mochrie, Greg Proops and Ryan Stiles (T) (3413)
11.30 The Comedy Lab Ed Byrne and Jason Byrne collaborate (455055)
12.05am Under the Moon Through-the-night sports magazine. Includes **2.35** Football Italia **4.00** High Five **4.30** Kabaddi **5.00** Transworld Sport (82851104)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport With Becky Anderson (6396332)
7.00 WideWorld Part four. The hidden meanings in the decorations of the Albert Memorial (r) (T) (6154719)
7.30 Milkshake! (2793719)
7.35 Wimzie's House (r) (6358622)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (7769974)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (7768245)
9.00 HouseBusters (r) (T) (3229784)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (r) (4154142)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (8310871)
10.20 Sunset Beach Cole works out the mystery (T) (9792023)
11.10 Leeza (r) (8635603)
12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (7762061)
12.30 Family Affairs Jack owns up; (r) (T) 5 News Update (2210871)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Jessica feels a fool (T) (6146790)
1.30 Sons and Daughters Paul makes a generous gesture; 5 News Update (2219142)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (1663622)
2.30 Good Afternoon Daily entertainment, with Cryptogram, Liverpool Mums and Pets Go Public; 5 News Update (2264697)
3.30 A Stoning in Fulham County (TVM 1988) FILM A family of fundamentalist Christians are persecuted by youths — leading to the death of their baby. Drama, starring Ken Olin. Directed by Larry Elikan (T) (7612784)
5.20 The Roseanne Show (9269516)
6.00 100 Per Cent Computer-generated quiz (2598061)
6.30 Family Affairs Annie cancels Elsa's funeral service (T) (2416413)
7.00 5 News; Weather Round-up of the day's stories (T) (1561210)
7.30 The Pepsi Chart Live performances by Billie, the Beautiful South and the Spice Girls; 5 News Update (2412697)



A profile of the Hollywood actor Leonardo DiCaprio (8pm)

8.00 CHOICE **Leonardo DiCaprio** Profile of the superstar, charting his meteoric rise to fame (T) (5739245)
9.00 Separate Lives (1995) FILM Ex-cop James Belushi becomes involved with a psychology professor who is suffering from a split personality. Thriller, with Linda Hamilton, Vera Miles, Elisabeth Moss and Drew Snyder. Directed by David Madden (T) (6732332)
11.00 Melinda's Big Night In Showbiz chat with Toby Anstis (2491413)
11.40 Compromising Situations A man's home is repaired by a collection of beautiful women (r) (7200210)
12.15am NHL: American Ice Hockey St Louis Blues at Dallas Stars (33566017)
4.40 Club Class Comedy (r) (81666475)
5.05 Move on Up (r) (19336746)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (7228982)

PAY TV: SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*



SKY 1

7.00am The Simpsons (47993) **7.30** The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (57142) **8.30** Hollywood Squares (62697) **9.00** Guilty! (17871) **10.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (59784) **11.00** Oprah Winfrey (42448) **12.00pm** Jenny Jones (8631697) **12.55** Special K Collection (53818332) **1.00** Days of Our Lives (9885809) **1.55** Special K Collection (77137719) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (6531413) **2.55** Special K Collection (2547968) **3.00** Jenny Jones (7571790) **3.55** Special K Collection (8141516) **4.00** Guilty! (82429) **5.00** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (5622) **6.00** Married — With Children (4055) **6.30** Friends (1535) **7.00** The Simpsons (6351) **7.30** Real TV (7719) **8.00** Stargate SG-1 (21852) **9.00** The X Files (14516) **10.00** Millennium (17603) **11.00** Friends (83158) **11.30** Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (30968) **12.30am** Renegade (25291) **1.30** Long Play (4675727)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 26) **Face/Off (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60) **The Peacemaker (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59) **Rocket Man (1997)** **Austin Powers: International Man of Mystery (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58) **Cop Land (1997)**

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars (1973) (2135622) **8.00** Eddie Izzard's Film Choice (5216806) **8.01 The Madness of King George (1994)** (2041239) **10.00** Eddie Izzard's Film Choice (7416806) **10.01 Nikita (1990)** (8184500) **12.00am The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert (1994)** (7703524) **1.45 Bad Lieutenant (1992)** (8337814) **3.20 King of New York (1990)** (44174843) **5.30** Gunbuster (3455098) **6.00** Close

SKY PREMIER

6.00am Forbidden Territory: Stanley's Search for Livingstone (1997) (95871) **8.00 Lies He Told (1996)** (25239) **10.00 The Phoenix and the Magic Carpet (1994)** (94784) **12.00pm Forbidden Territory: Stanley's Search for Livingstone (1997)** (17390) **2.00 Mystery Science Theater 3000: The Movie (1996)** (33697) **4.00 Lies He Told (1996)** (2968) **6.00 The Phoenix and the Magic Carpet (1994)** (98790) **7.30** Barry Norman's Film Night (5559) **8.00 Hackers (1995)** (21806) **10.00 A Murder of Crows (1998)** (695622) **11.50 Dead Silence (1996)** (880158) **1.30am Surviving Picasso (1996)** (93228340) **3.35 The Dukes of Hazzard Reunion (1997)** (21066017)

SKY MOVIEMAX

6.10am Malaika (1998) (89174887) **7.50 All The Winters That Have Been (1997)** (98827239) **9.30 Spy Hard (1996)** (18351) **11.00 Trail of Tears (TVM 1995)** (30351) **1.00pm Where the Red Fern Grows: Part Two (1990)** (34177) **3.00 Malaika (1998)** (34784) **5.00 All The Winters That Have Been (1997)** (45974) **7.00 Spy Hard (1996)** (56697) **9.00 Mars Attacks! (1996)** (22535) **11.00 Below Utopia (1997)** (42245) **12.30am Butter (1997)** (280123) **2.10 Freshman Fall (1996)** (259801) **3.45 The Mighty Quinn (1989)** (89832340)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm The Magnificent Ambersons (1942) (7676719) **6.00 Monsieur Verdoux (1947)** (9902581) **8.00 Heartburn (1986)** (9914326) **10.00 Black Sunday (1977)** (43027993) **12.25am The Boston Strangler (1968)** (5025123) **2.20** Hall of Fame: Bob Hope (37103302) **2.50 Hotel Reserve (1944)** (68879949) **4.20 Back to Bataan (1945)** (7929494)

TNT

9.00pm Ryan's Daughter (1970) (93329413) **12.15am Two Loves (1961)** (25028307) **2.00 The Alphabet Murders (1966)** (34884982) **3.30 Jeopardy (1953)** (50792814) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre **7.15** Wrestling Wire **8.15** Sports Centre **8.30** Racing News **9.00** Aerobics **9.30** The Footballers' Football Show **10.30** Inside Scottish Football **11.30** Fastrax **12.00pm** Aerobics **12.30** FA Cup Special **2.00** Sports Unlimited **3.00** Inside Scottish Football **4.00** The Footballers' Football Show **5.00** Wrestling **6.00** Sports Centre **6.30** Unbelievable Sports **7.00** Live Football Special **10.15** Sports Centre **10.30** World Pool Masters **11.30** Unbelievable Sports **12.00am** Sports Centre **12.15** Football Special **1.45** Ringside Boxing **3.15** Sports Centre **3.30** Close

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics **7.30** Sports Centre **7.45** Racing News **8.15** Fastrax **8.45** Sports Centre **9.00** Fish TV **10.00** Equestrianism **11.00** Sports Unlimited **12.00pm** Table Tennis **1.00** Equestrianism **2.00** Moto-Plus **2.30** Fastrax **3.00** Golf Extra **5.00** World Pool Masters **6.00** Watersports World **7.00** Davis Cup Tennis **8.00** World Pool Masters **9.00** Golf Extra **11.00** Figure Skating **1.00am** Davis Cup Tennis **2.00** Watersports World **3.00** Sports Centre **3.15** Close

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00pm Wrestling **1.00** Fish TV **2.00** Boxing Superbouts **3.00** Olympic Destinies **3.30** V-Max **4.00** Sports Unlimited **5.00** Figure Skating **7.00** Fish TV **8.00** Ringside Boxing **9.30** Unbelievable Sports **10.00** Olympics Golden Moments **10.30** Sky Classics Gold: Brian Lara **11.30** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Eurogoals **9.00** Live Women's Biathlon **10.45** Alpine Skiing **12.00pm** Live Biathlon **2.00** Equestrianism **3.00** Biathlon **5.00** Speedworld **6.30** Football **7.30** Live Football **10.00** Boxing **11.00** Speedworld **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.00** The Bill **9.30** Middlemarch **10.30** Angels **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Middlemarch **2.00** Dallas **2.55** The Bill **3.25** The Bill **3.55** EastEnders **4.30** Angels **5.00** All Creatures Great and Small **6.00** Due South **7.00** May to December **7.40** It Ain't Half Hot, Mum **8.20** Dad's Army **9.00** One Foot in the Grave **9.40** Silent Witness **11.35** The Bill **12.05am** The Bill **12.35** Spender **1.30** Big Break **2.10** Only When I Laugh **2.40** Shopping with Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am The Box **7.00** On the Buses **7.30** The Fenn Street Gang **8.00** That's My Boy **8.30** No Honestly **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Emmerdale Farm **10.00** thirtysomething **11.00** Hawaii Five O **12.00pm** Classic Coronation Street **12.30** Emmerdale Farm **1.00** How's Your Father? **1.30** Watching **2.00** thirtysomething **3.00** The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes **4.00** The Professionals **5.00** Hawaii Five O **6.00** Emmerdale Farm **6.30** Classic Coronation Street **7.00** Mission: Impossible **8.00** The Professionals **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Sez Les **10.00** Jokers Wild **10.30** Hogan's Heroes **11.00** Men & Motors

CARLTON SELECT [CABLE]

5.00pm What's Cooking? **5.30** Gridlock **6.00** London Bridge **6.30** Rising Damp **7.00** Boon **8.00** First Sign of Madness **8.30** Superchefs **9.00** Shine On, Harvey Moon **10.00** Soldier, Soldier **11.00** Men of the World **11.30** Sale and Sound **12.00am** Pull the Other One **12.30** Gridlock **1.00** Close

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Bear in the Big Blue House **6.25** Classic Toons **6.35** Gummi Bears **7.00** Classic Toons **7.10** Aladdin **7.35** 101 Dalmatians **8.00** Goof Troop **8.25** Classic Toons **8.30** Timon and Pumbaa **8.45** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **9.00** The Adventures of Spot **9.07** Animal Shelf **9.17** Pocket Dragons **9.30** Bear in the Big Blue House **9.55** The Toothbrush Family **10.00** Bite Size **10.12** Tots TV **10.30** Big Garage **10.45** PB and J Otter **11.00** Sesame Street **12.00pm** Spot **12.07** Animal Shelf **12.17** Pocket Dragons **12.30** Bear in the Big Blue House **12.55** Toothbrush Family **1.00** Bite Size **1.12** Tots TV **1.30** Big Garage **1.45** PB and J Otter **2.00** New Winnie the Pooh **2.30** Quack Pack **3.00** The Little Mermaid **3.30** Timon and Pumbaa **3.45** Aladdin **4.10** 101 Dalmatians **4.40** Art Attack **5.00** Smart Guy **5.30** Microsoap **5.45** Recess **6.00** Wonder Years **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00** Pepper Ann **7.15** Brotherly Love **7.45** Microsoap **8.00 FILM: Just in Time (1996)** **9.30** Microsoap **10.00** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Power Rangers Turbo **7.00** Mortal Kombat **7.30** Donkey Kong Country **8.00** Goosebumps **8.30** Beetleborgs Metallix **9.00** Masked Rider **9.30** The Incredible Hulk **10.00** Iron Man **10.30** X-Men **11.00** Spiderman **11.30** Life with Louie **12.00pm** Ace Ventura **12.30** Casper **12.45** Toonsylvania **1.00** Sam and Max **1.15** Home to Rent **1.30** The Incredible Hulk **2.00** Iron Man **2.30** X-Men **3.00** Spiderman **3.30** Roy and Lisa's Big Ride **3.35** Mortal Kombat **4.00** Sam and Max **5.00** Goosebumps **5.30** Eerie, Indiana: The Other Dimension **6.00** Donkey Kong Country **6.30** Mowgli **7.00** Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Fraggle Rock **6.30** Muppet Babies **7.00** Hey Arnold! **7.30** Rugrats **8.00** Doug **8.30** Arthur **9.00** Children's BBC **10.00** Wimzie's House **10.30** Babar **11.00** The Magic School Bus **11.30** PB Bear etc **12.00pm** Rugrats **12.30** Blue's Clues **1.00** Bananas in Pyjamas **1.30** Little Bear Stories **2.00** Rocky and the Dodos etc **2.30** CBBC **3.30** Angry Beavers **4.00** Catdog **4.30** Rugrats **5.00** Sister Sister **5.30** Kenan and Kel **6.00** Sabrina **6.30** Moesha **7.00** Close

TROUBLE

7.00am California Dreams **7.30** Hang Time **8.00** Saved by the Bell: The New Class **8.30** USA High **9.00** Heartbreak High **10.00** Sweat **10.30** Hollyoaks **11.00** Sweet Valley High **11.30** California Dreams **12.00pm** In the House **12.30** The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air **1.00** Heartbreak High **2.00** Hollyoaks **2.30** Sweat **3.00** Ready or Not **3.30** USA High **4.00** The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air **4.30** In the House **5.00** Saved By the Bell: The New Class **5.30** Sweet Valley High **6.00** Hang Time **6.30** Blast **7.00** USA High **7.30** Ready or Not

BRAVO

8.00pm The Extremists **8.30** Bushido **9.00** LAPD **9.30** Cops **10.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **10.30** Scary Sex, Sexy Sci-fi Drama **11.00 FILM: Frankenhooker (1990)** **1.00am** Sex Bytes **1.35** Scary Sex Sexy Sci-fi Drama **2.05** Extreme Championship Wrestling **2.35** Cops **3.05 FILM: Red Heat (1988)** **5.00** Freaky Stories **5.30** Bushido **6.00** Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Clueless **7.30** Desmond's **8.00** Roseanne **8.30** Just Shoot Me **9.00** Cybill **9.30** Seinfeld **10.00** Frasier **10.30** Cheers **11.00** Festival of Fun **11.30** The Larry Sanders Show **12.00am** Late Night with David Letterman **1.00** Taxi **1.30** The Critic **2.00** Dr Katz **2.30** Soap **3.00** Hooperman **3.30** Nightstand **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 6pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am Bloomberg Information Television **8.00** Sightings **9.00** Battlestar Galactica **10.00** Quantum Leap **11.00** Dark Shadows **11.30** The Ray Bradbury Theatre **12.00pm** The Twilight Zone **12.30** The Twilight Zone **1.00** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30 FILM: Killdozer (TVM 1974)** **3.00** Battlestar Galactica **4.00** Amazing Stories **4.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **5.00** Sightings **6.00** Time Trax **7.00** Quantum Leap **8.00** The Flash **9.00** PSI Factor: Chronicles of the Paranormal **10.00 FILM: Life Force (1985)** **12.00am** PSI Factor: Chronicles of the Paranormal **1.00 FILM: Life Force (1985)** **3.00** The Twilight Zone **3.30** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am The Joy of Painting **6.30** The Great Gardening Plot **7.00** Garden Club **7.30** Our House **8.00** Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **8.30** Doorstep DIY **9.00** The Joy of Painting **9.25** The Home and Leisure House **9.30** The Great Gardening Plot **10.00** Garden Club **10.30** Our House **11.00** Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **11.30** Doorstep DIY **12.00pm** Home Again with Bob Vila **12.30** The House **1.00** A Cook's Journey **1.30** In the Workshop **2.00** Our House Down Under **2.30** Gimme Shelter **3.00** Two's Country **3.30** This Old House with Steve and Norm

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt's Fishing World **4.30** Walker's World **5.00** Connections 2 by James Burke **5.30** Jurassica **6.00** Animal Doctor **6.30** Wildest Antarctica **7.30** Beyond 2000 **8.00** How Did They Build That? **8.30** Animal X **9.00** The Unexplained **10.00** Superstructures **11.00** America Exposed **11.30** America Exposed **12.00am** Empire of the East **1.00** Connections 2 by James Burke **1.30** Ancient Warriors **2.00** Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00pm Klondike & Snow **1.00** Animal Doctor **1.30** Australia Wild **2.00** All Bird TV **2.30** Human/Nature **3.30** Animal Medics, Zoo Story **4.00** Jack Hanna's Zoo Life **4.30** Wildlife SOS **5.00** Pet Rescue **5.30** Australia Wild **6.00** Kratt's Creatures **6.30** Lassie **7.00** Primate Special: Monkey Business **7.30** The Life of a Macaque **8.00** Just Hanging On **9.00** Animal Doctor **9.30** Animal Detectives **10.00** Wildlife SOS **10.30** The Crocodile Hunter **11.00** Animal X **11.30** Animal Detectives **12.00am** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm Kangaroo Comeback **8.00** Lords of the Garden **9.00** Passionate People: Mama Tina **10.00** Heroes of the High Frontier **11.00** Cathedrals in the Sea **12.00am** Ducks Under Siege

HISTORY

4.00pm Airborne: Under Eastern Skies **5.00** Classic Cars: Honda NSX **6.00** Who Wrote the Bible? Out of the Past **7.00** Brute Force Fighters **7.30** Edward Windsor Presents Crown and Country

CARLTON FOOD [CABLE]

9.00am Food Network Daily **9.30** Food for Thought **10.00** Feasts of the World **10.30** Twelve Chefs of Christmas **11.00** What's Cooking? **11.30** Coxon's Kitchen College **12.00pm** Food Network Daily **12.30** Frances Bissell's Westcountry Christmas **1.00** Food for Thought **1.30** From the Ground Up **2.00** Caribbean Light **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** Surprise Chefs **3.30** Twelve Chefs of Christmas **4.00** Thoroughly Modern British **4.30** Japaneasy **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Tiny Living **9.00** The Roseanne Show **9.50** The Jerry Springer Show **10.40** Michael Cole **11.30** Brookside **12.00pm** Living Issues **12.30** Rescue 911 **1.00** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **1.30** Ready, Steady, Cook **2.05** Rolonda **2.55** Living it Up! **3.55** The Roseanne Show **4.45** Tempestt **5.35** Can't Cook, Won't Cook **6.10** The Jerry Springer Show **7.00** Rescue 911 **7.30** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **8.00** Ally McBeal **9.00** Halifax FP **11.00** The Spicy Sex Files **12.00am** Close

ZEE TV

5.00am Manabi **5.30** Music Time **6.00** Out and About **6.30** Beegi Ke Pg **7.00** Jaagran **7.30** News **8.00** India Business Report **8.30** Sailaab **9.00** Rishtey: The Love Stories **10.00** Panchwan Mausam **11.00** Aashiana **11.30** Parampara **12.00pm FILM: Hindi Movie: Jaane Anjane** **3.00** Chalo Cinema **3.30** Zee Health Show **4.00** Campus **4.30** Ek Minute **5.00** Mr Minloo **5.30** Gumrah **6.00** Top of the Tops **6.30** Banegi Apni Baat **7.00** Baat Ban Jaye **7.30** Fun Filmi Style **8.00** News **8.30** Amanat **9.00** Ajnabi Raasley **10.00** Ikke Pe Ikka **10.30** Woh **11.00** Purushkhetra **12.00am** News **12.30** Tandoori Masala **1.00** Joe Sahab **1.30** Raahat **2.00 FILM: Gujarti Movie: Kuldpak** **4.30** Ridhi Siddhi



CRICKET 40

Stewart bemoans lack of batting spirit from sorry England

SPORT

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 16 1998

RACING 39

Trainers angry at losing out in BHB reshuffle



Kelly and Wiseman pay heavy price for scheme to lend money to Welsh FA

Loss of leadership leaves FA reeling

By Oliver Holt
Football Correspondent

THE ill-considered actions of a Southampton coroner left English football naked, cold, helpless and spreadeagled on the slab of his conceit and misjudgment yesterday after a grubby financial scandal provoked a grisly blood-letting in the corridors of power at the Football Association.

The FA was attempting a desperate damage-limitation exercise last night after the resignation of Graham Kelly, its chief executive, and a unanimous vote of no-confidence in Keith Wiseman, its chairman and a coroner by profession, over their handling of a mysterious and apparently unsanctioned £3.2 million loan to the Football Association of Wales (FAW).

The scandal, the heavy hints of impropriety and the stench of overvaulting ambition have already cast a pall over England's bid to stage the 2006 World Cup finals. It has also thrown the position of Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, into doubt, because Wiseman and Kelly were two of his staunchest allies.

More than all that, though, it has brought shame and embarrassment upon the arbiters of England's national game and raised the question that if this kind of mismanagement can exist within Lancaster Gate itself, then how on earth can the FA pretend to exercise any form of moral or punitive judgment on the rest of the sport?

There will be few tears shed for Kelly, an essentially decent man but an apparatchik who had come to epitomise everything that was ineffectual in the administration of the sport. There will be even less grieving for Wiseman when he follows Kelly's example, as surely he must, and bows to the inevitable. Yesterday, despite the sanction of the FA's executive committee, he was pathetically attempting to cling to power.

"The vote of no-confidence was taken with sadness," David Davies, newly appointed as executive director of the FA, said, "and only after considerable examination of all the circumstances. It was not taken lightly. Such an outcome has been painful for all those involved in taking the decision."

As the FA attempted to come to terms with an upheaval unprecedented in its 135-year history, it installed Geoff Thompson, its vice-chairman, the chairman of the Sheffield and Hallamshire FA, as its temporary leader. It is expected that when the executive committee next meets on January 4, David Sheepshanks, the chairman of Ipswich Town and the former chairman of the Football League, will be installed in Wiseman's position. He is thought to harbour doubts about Hoddle's stewardship and would certainly not have been as tolerant of the England coach's increasingly erratic, self-serving behaviour as Wiseman and Kelly have been.

The inquest into the loan, which came to light only a few weeks ago when an invoice from the FAW for the first instalment of £400,000 came through the letterbox at Lancaster Gate, reached its climax yesterday afternoon when the 11-man executive committee met in Central London to consider the case. Kelly is believed to have resigned in the immediate aftermath of that meeting. He is thought to have paid the price for sanctioning Wiseman's decision to make the loan, allegedly without the knowledge of the rest of the FA hierarchy.

The committee passed its vote of no-confidence in Wiseman, but the chairman refused to resign. He is thought to be planning one last, desperate plea for understanding before he abandons his own troubled career as a football bureaucrat. His career is likely to come to an end when the FA executive seeks endorsement for its vote of no-confidence at the special FA council meeting on January 4. So far, his tenure appears to have brought only uncertainty and a degree of contempt upon England's efforts to raise their profile in world football.

The clear implication, although it is something that Wiseman denies vigorously, is that he pushed through the loan to the FAW to further his own political ambitions within world football. The home nations only have one vice-president representing them on the Fifa executive committee and that post is at present held by David Will, a Brechin lawyer and Scottish FA official. The loan to the FAW has been interpreted in many quarters as a rather crude attempt to buy its support for a bid to elect Wiseman to that position instead.

That, in turn, was seen in many quarters as a stepping-stone to the improvement of England's chances of securing the right to stage the 2006 World Cup. Yet even though Wiseman scarcely had any credibility among Fifa delegates anyway, even though there is a theory that things could not get much worse under his leadership, the embarrassment in which the FA is now wallowing will surely have undermined its case even further.

Equally, Hoddle's precarious position in charge of the national team became even more fragile when the news broke last night. Davies, the FA's director of public affairs who is being widely tipped to succeed Kelly, played Mark Antony as he stood over the departed chief executive and insisted that Hoddle's position had not been weakened, but now that Kelly has gone and Wiseman's position is untenable, Hoddle no longer has the protection of the men who pushed through a hefty pay rise for him that flew in the face of public opinion and of all rational argument.

The England coach may now find his use of Eileen Drewery, the outlandish faith healer, coming under increased pressure, something that is likely to unsettle him as England prepare for their vital European championship qualifying tie against Poland at Wembley on March 27.

It all makes a sad epitaph for Kelly, the man who is perhaps best known for presiding over draws for successive rounds of the FA Cup. As for Wiseman, he, at last, knows what it is like to be on the wrong end of an inquest.

Kelly resigns.....1
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Chelsea ready.....41

THE CENTRAL ALLEGATIONS

The allegation against Graham Kelly and Keith Wiseman is that they privately brokered an agreement with the Football Association of Wales (FAW) last May. This was reported as a promised loan of £3.2 million in exchange for the guarantee of votes in ballots designed to place an English official on the executive committees of Uefa and Fifa, the European and world governing bodies of football respectively. Having an Englishman on these committees would help greatly England's bid to stage the World Cup finals in 2006. Last week, under pressure from a sub-committee of leading English football officials, the FAW agreed to accept £900,000 over three years rather than the £400,000 per year until 2005, which it is claimed was promised by Kelly and Wiseman, because that had not been authorised by the FA's executive committee.



Davies: sadness



Out of position: Kelly's resignation brought to an end a decade of service to the FA

Wales official offers support

GRAHAM KELLY had an ally last night in John Hughes, the president of the Football Association of Wales (FAW), who claimed that there was "nothing sinister" in the Football Association's offer of financial help. Hughes, who was stunned when he learned of Kelly's resignation, said: "All that money was to go to charity, the Welsh football trust, to help promote and develop youth and women's football in Wales.

"There was nothing sinister in it and it certainly had nothing to do with the senior side. Whatever has been done has been with the full knowledge of the FAW council. I passed on the resolution to them and they voted on it.

"I am shocked at the news of Graham's resignation because he is a great friend. The FA have lost a good man. I've a lot of admiration for the work he has done at the FA and his other work, which has seen him devote a lot of his time to Uefa and Fifa."

David Mellor, the head of the Government's Football Task Force, has called for a radical overhaul of the game's administration and believes that Keith Wiseman, the FA chairman, should also go. "On a personal level, I'm very sorry about this," he said. "I like Graham and he worked hard to make the existing structure of football administration work well in this country.

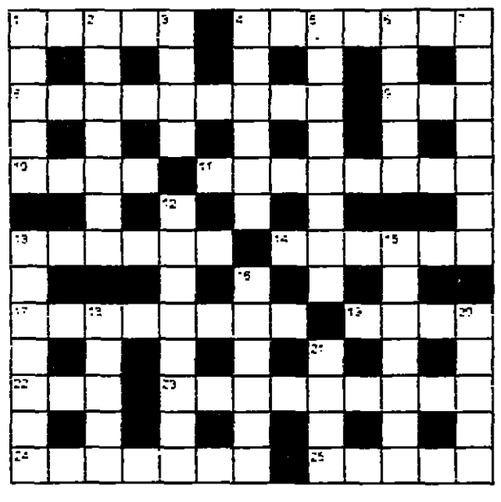
"But what has happened today, plus all the other problems that have either been mishandled or not handled by the FA, must surely make everyone aware that there will have to be a shake-up in the way football is administered.

"Finding a replacement for Graham Kelly and, one must presume, Keith Wiseman, since his position is surely untenable, is merely papering over the cracks. There is no alternative to fundamental change."

Tony Banks, the Minister for Sport, said: "It is a matter great sadness to hear of events at the FA. However, it is for the internal workings of the FA to resolve the situation.

"In the meantime, the Government express their satisfaction with the stated determination of the FA to pursue with all vigour England's 2006 World Cup bid."

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1590

ACROSS
1 Nelson's captain: fat film comedian (5)
4 Complete disaster (7)
8 Rolling success, to jump on (9)
9 Check: a surgeon (3)
10 An Asian hardwood (4)
11 Ordered series (5)
13 Understand: receive: deceive (4,2)
14 Clinging mollusc: type of mine (6)
17 Transparently clear (5)
19 R & A game (4)
22 Yank (3)
23 Confused, jumbled, situation (9)
24 Train of followers (7)
25 Shy (5)

DOWN
1 Costume: custom (5)
2 Search thoroughly (7)
3 Two-master: ship's boat (4)
4 Macbeth *saw it before him* (6)
5 Mechanical: vulgar (8)
6 Witches' team (5)
7 Plead with (7)
12 A watering down (5)
13 Betting advisor (7)
15 One requiring to be solved (7)
16 Agile (6)
18 Illumination (5)
20 Inundate (5)
21 Type: arrange (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1589
ACROSS: 1 Reticent 5 Farm 9 Take on the chin 10 Knot 11 Exploit 13 Cachet 15 Bridle 18 Orpheus 20 Soft 23 Go the distance 24 Dint 25 Vehement
DOWN: 1 Rite 2 Token 3 Chortle 4 Nether 6 Ashford 7 Minstrel 8 Heap 12 Act of God 14 Capstan 16 Rosette 17 Aspire 19 Even 21 Fence 22 Kent

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England made to confront loss of global influence

Rob Hughes says the FA must act swiftly to restore its credibility

At a time when corruption is wafting through the Olympic rings and the rulers are saying nothing can be done, Graham Kelly has been forced to resign from his job as the chief executive of the Football Association. This leaves, alas, Keith Wiseman, the chairman, whose deeds Kelly was carrying out, obfuscating and attempting to justify the unjustifiable.

Football — and England's reputation — will not be served until Wiseman, the coroner from Southampton, is forced out of administration. His claim that there is nothing wrong in helping small nations with development programmes and youth sounds more in keeping with the Latin American rule of thumb that all is fair in sport and war providing you have the means to buy it.

Wiseman, whose acquisition of shares at Southampton Football Club raised many questions, was right in one aspect: England is shamefully under-represented in the policy-making cabals of international sport. The FA has neither a seat on the Uefa executive that runs the flagship European football, nor a place that counts on the 24-man executive committee that legislates for Fifa, the international football authority.

But he is wrong in believing that the end justifies the means. It is not just the small question of a gargantuan chunk of FA money. How on earth did Wiseman presume he had the right to negotiate £3.2 million, an £400,000 per season, to the FA of Wales without accounting for it to the full FA council? Indeed, it now appears that Wiseman pushed through this favour to his Welsh cousins with only the approval of the now-departed Kelly.

Everyone abroad, if few in the corridors of Lancaster Gate, knew what was happening. Last summer, during the power game that installed Sepp Blatter in succession to João Havelange as president of Fifa, an irate David Will, the Scottish solicitor who does have a place on the executives of both Fifa and Uefa, was informed by the Irish that the Football Association of Ireland had rejected a similar offer from Wiseman. The point of the offer, to both associations, was to guarantee their support to install Wiseman in place of Will at the next opportunity on the international executive bodies.

If by some astonishing mischance Wiseman sees off the Football Association dissidents to his game, then rest assured this will be the end of any aspiration England has to host the World Cup in 2006. Consider it this way: England has nothing to commend it more than its honour and Wiseman is seen by those who have the votes as a man without honour. He claims that he had no knowledge of the "Gentleman's Agreement" through which Sir Bert Millichip, his predecessor, negotiated Euro 96, in exchange for which he, representing the FA, would support Germany's bid for the 2006 World Cup.

Wiseman apparently ignored that pact and, disturbingly, David Davies, who now stands as interim executive director in place of Kelly, was made to be the mouthpiece of Lancaster Gate denials that Millichip's handshake with Egidius Braun, the German football president, and Lennart Johansson, the president of Uefa, ever took place.

Nevertheless, the charmless Wiseman had the affrontery to attempt to put himself forward for the Uefa executive, knowing full well that Johansson, Braun and the six other Uefa representatives on the Fifa executive had by then committed themselves to Germany and to the commitment made on a handshake.

The FA brushed this aside, insisting that, if it was not signed on paper, it was worthless.

For the moment, Kelly is the fall guy. He was weak, to say the least, in partnering the methods of Wiseman and heaven knows what Alan Hardaker, the old ruler of Lytham St Anne's, would have thought of the limp and spineless way that Kelly, his junior, had allowed himself to be Wiseman's apologist.

Geoff Thompson, who for the time being will lead the rump of the FA executive, until the full council can hear Wiseman's plea to remain at his post, has the makings of a Hardaker in the administration. Whereas Hardaker, of the old Football League, sat in Lancashire and drove legislation through, sometimes bullied it, Thompson is a Yorkshire lawyer who would stand for no impropriety and would lead from the front the attempt to rescue what remains of England's standing in world football.



Wiseman: obdurate

WISEMAN FACTFILE

Wiseman is a solicitor who specialises in childcare. He is also the coroner for Southampton and the New Forest. He won a tennis Blue at Oxford and won the Hampshire singles' title eight times in ten years up to 1973.

1987: Becomes a director of Southampton, the club he supported from childhood.
March 1988: He is made vice-chairman of Southampton.
1993: Joined the FA Council as Premier League representative
July 1996: Succeeds Sir Bert Millichip as chairman of FA and vows to bring 2006 World Cup to England.
Nov 1998: Sanctioned a grant of £3.2 million to the Welsh FA, thought to be a reward for voting with him in Fifa elections.

